செப்டம்பர் 2005

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மாண்மிகு தமிழக முதலமைச்சர்

தலைமைச் செயலகம்
சென்னை – 600 009

சி.வி. சண்முகம்
கல்வி மற்றும் வணிகவரித் துறை
அமைச்சர்

வாழ்த்துரை

தமிழ்நாடு ஓவிய நுண்கலைக் குழு என்னும் தமிழ், ஆங்கில இரு மொழிக் கலை இதழை வெளியிட்டு வருகிறது. தற்போது இந்த 25வது இதழை வெளியிடுவது அறிந்து மிக்க மகிழ்ச்சியடைகிறேன்.

ஓவிய, சிற்பப் படைப்பாளர்கள், கலை ஆர்வலர், தொல்லியலார், காட்சிக்கூட நிறுவனர், கலைப்படைப்புகளைப் பேணுவோர் எனப் பல்வேறு பிரிவினர் ஓவிய, சிற்பக் கலை வளர்ச்சிக்குத் துணையாக விளங்குகின்றனர். இவர்கள் பார்வையில் நுண்கலைகளைப் பற்றியச் செய்திகளை உள்ளடக்கிய கட்டுரைகள் இடம் பெற்றுள்ள இந்த இதழ் மரபுத் தொன்மையையும், நவீன நுணுக்கங்களையும் அறிய வாய்ப்பாக அமையப் பெற்றுள்ளது.

மாண்புமிகு தமிழக முதல்வர் புரட்சித் தலைவி **அம்மா** அவர்களின் சீரிய தலைமையின்கீழ் தமிழகத்தில் கல்விப்பணி சிறந்தோங்கி வரும் இவ்வேளையில் 'நுண்கலை' இதழ்கள் தொடர்ந்து வெளியிடப்பட்டு சிறப்பு பெற வாழ்த்துகிறேன்.

20.12.05

(சி.வி. சண்முகம்)

தமிழ்நாடு ஓவிய நுண்கலைக் குழுவின் அரையாண்டுக் கலை இதழ்

A bi-lingual art magazine of the State Lalit Kala Akademi of Tamilnadu

Editor
Dr. V. Jeyaraj

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NUNKALAI நுண்கலை

செப்டம்பர் 2005

ஆசிரியரிடமிருந்து........

மனிதன் தன் வாழ்நாளின் தொடக்கத்திலிருந்தே கலையுடன் ஒன்றி விடுகிறான் என்றால் மிகையாகாது. மனித சூழலுக்கேற்ப கலை பல்வேறு பரிமாணங்களைப் பெறுகின்றது. மனிதனின் அனுபவம் கலையின் தன்மைகளை மாற்றுகிறது. தொடக்கத்தில் கலையைத் தனது பொழுதுபோக்காகக் கருதும் மனிதன் நாளடைவில் அதனைத் தன் தொழிலாகவே மாற்றிக் கொள்கிறான். கலையால் தங்களை செல்வந்தர்களாக்கிக் கொண்டவர்களுமுண்டு. கலைக்காகத் தங்களைத் தியாகம் செய்தவர்களுமுண்டு. கலையால் வளர்ந்தவர்களே அதிகம். கலையில் ஈடுபாடுடையவர்கள் செய்கின்ற பணிகளினால் தாங்கள் வாழும் சமுதாயம் சிறப்படைகிறது. தாங்களும் சிறப்பாகவே வாழ்கிறார்கள்.

கலை வளர்க்கும் நிறுவனங்கள் பெருகும் சூழ்நிலையில் பண வேட்கையால் கலைஞர்களின் சிறந்த திறன் அழிந்துவிடுமோ என்ற அச்சமும் பெருகி வருகிறது. பணவேட்கையைக் குறைகூறவில்லை. அதனால் சிறந்த கலை அழிந்துவிடுமோ என்ற அச்சத்தால் என் மனம் துடிக்கிறது. அருங்காட்சியகங்கள், கலைக் கூடங்கள் என்றில்லாமல் உணவகங்கள், தங்குமிடங்கள் எனப் பல்வேறு இடங்களில் கலைப் படைப்புகள் பரவியுள்ளன. இது ஒரு வளர்ச்சியே என்றாலும் ஒரு புறம் புதிய படைப்புகள் உருவாகிக்கொண்டிருக்கும்போது ஒரு பக்கம் சிறந்த கலைஞர்களின் படைப்புகள் நகலாக்கப்படுகின்றன. கலைக்காக படைப்புகள் என்ற நிலை மாறி, பொருளுக்காகவே கலை என்ற நிலை உருவாகியுள்ளது.

கலைக்காக பல்வேறு ஊக்கங்கள் அளிக்கப்பட்டாலும் சிறந்த கலைஞர்கள் நலிந்து விடுவார்களோ என்ற அச்சமும் கூடவே வருவதையும் உணரமுடிகிறது. கலைஞர்களும் கலைப் படைப்புகளும் பெருக ஊக்கமளிக்கப்படவேண்டும். எனவே தான் இந்த நுண்கலை பருவ இதழ். இப்பருவ இதழில் ஓவியக் கலைஞர்கள், காப்பாட்சியர்கள், ஓவிய ஆசிரியர்கள், பாதுகாவலர்கள், விற்பனையாளர்கள் ஆகியோரின் கருத்துக்கள் கட்டுரை வடிவில் இடம் பெற்றுள்ளன. இப்பருவ இதழை மேம்படுத்த, தங்களது மேலான கருத்துக்கள் பெரிதும் வரவேற்கப்படுகின்றன.

அன்பளிப்பு
முனைவர் ம. இராசேந்திரன்
மேனாள் துணைவேந்தர்
தமிழ்ப் பல்கலைகழகம்
தஞ்சாவூர்.

Contents

சித்தன்ன வாசல் - அனைத்திலும் மெய்மை 1
திரு. கு. சந்திர சேகரன்

பாறை ஓவியங்களும் அவற்றின் பராமரிப்பும் 6
முனைவர் வே. ஜெயராஜ்

Symbolism in Art 12
Ms. Shakuntala Ramani

Folk Bronzes of Western Tamil Nadu 17
Dr. C. Maheswaran

The Bovine Principle 23
Ms. Chandra Ilango

Traditional Indian Art Forms - Creating Value ... 28
Ms. Geetha Srinivasan

The Culture of Printmaking in Chennai 35
Ms. Mallika

The Art of Adichanallur 41
Dr. T. Satyamurthy

A Few Thoughts on Art Investment 47
Ms. Meena Dadha

Raja Ravi Varma's Collections in the Government Museum, Chennai 50
Ms. A. Prema Dheebarani & Dr. V. Jeyaraj

1

சித்தன்ன வாசல் -அனைத்திலும் மெய்மை

* திரு. கு. சந்திரசேகரன்

காலங்காலமாகக் கூடிக் கலந்து, ஒருமுகப்பட்டு, நான் என எழுந்து.... இருந்து.....
யாவுமாய் பாவித்த தருணம்.

சித்திர வெளி

கரட்டு வெளிப் புல் திட்டில், திகைப் பூச்சியின் பனிகோர்த்த வலைப் பின்னலில்.... பயணியின் இரத்த ஓட்டத்தில்...தகிக்கும் ஒளி....

கத்தரித் தண்டு, பூஞ்சை, நீர் கோர்த்த ஒளிப் பச்சை, மெல்லிய நரம்பு, காம்பு, துளிர், இலை விளிம்பு, சல்லி நரம்புச் சுவர், துந்தி சுருள் நுனி, கொத்து, அரும்பு, மொக்கு, மலர், பூஉதிர்ந்த தழும்பு, பொறுக்கு, வெடிப்பு,....இடைவெளி.... .

சோம்பல் முறித்து, கண் சிமிட்டி, வாலாட்டி, சிறகு கோதி, மடு முட்டி, வெங்காயச் சருகு விரட்டி, பதுங்கி, பாய்ந்து, மிடறி, கவ்வி, இடம் பிடித்து, அழுது, சேற்றில் புரண்டு, சிரம் முட்டிச் சிரிக்கிறது குட்டிக் குழந்தை.

தளத்தில் தூரிகை ஒன்றுள் ஒன்றாய் கோர்க்க, காட்சித் தோற்றம், கைவினைக் கருவி என மனப் பதிவில் நுட்பம் விளைய..., சித்திரம் செய்யாது செய்த அனுபவம்..அனைத்து உயிர்களும் அளவற்ற ஆற்றல், உணர்வு, ஆனந்தம், அறிவு உடையன (சமண மெய்மை).

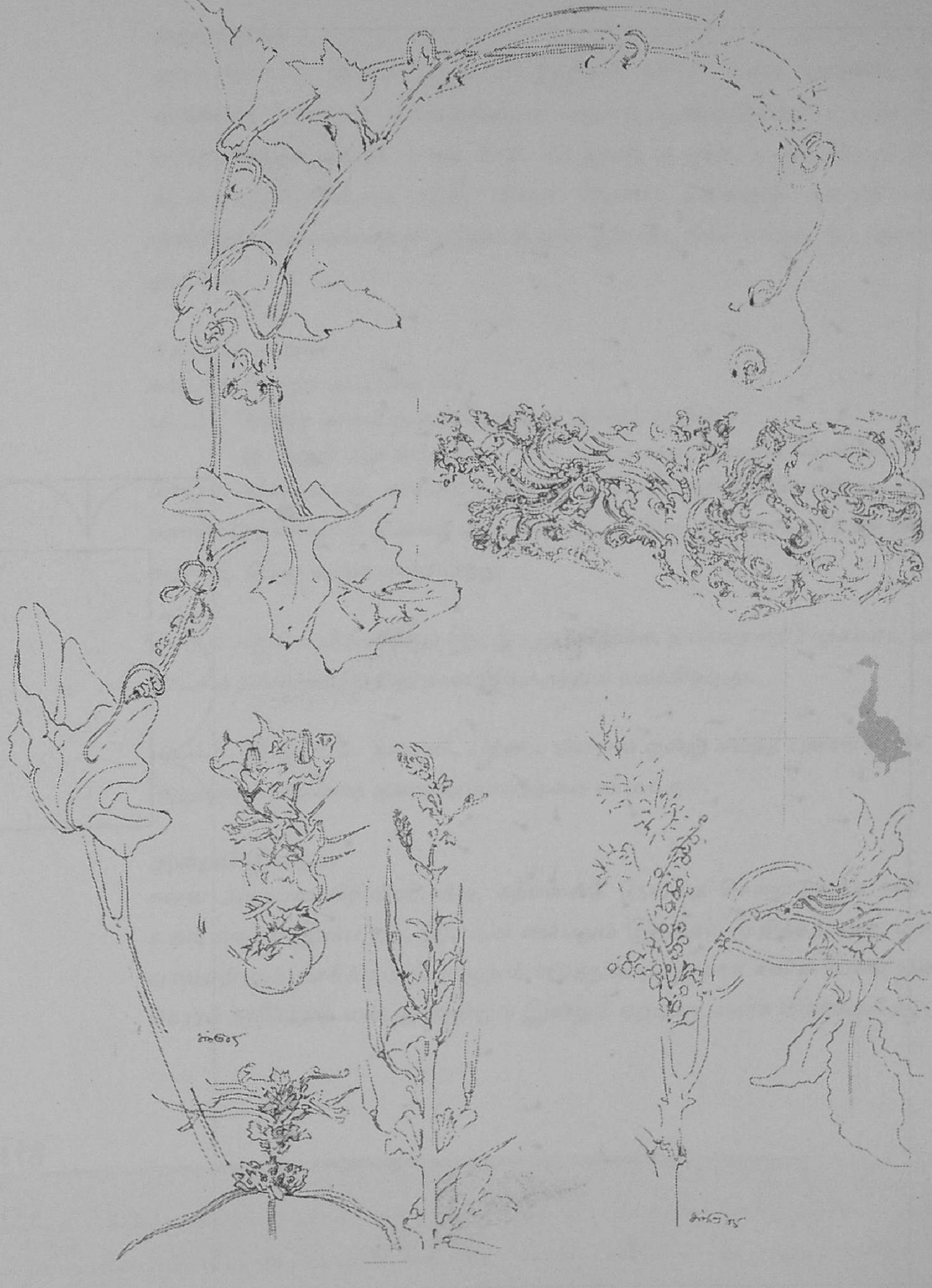
சித்திரக் குளம்

ஊற்றுக் கண் தமிழ் அவிழ்ந்து, ஓடி, குலை விரித்து சிற்றோடை சலசலக்க, வாய்க்கால் வரை அறுத்து, தடை மோதி, சுழன்று, அலை மோதி, நீர் குமிழ் அணைத்து, திசை மீண்டு, குளவாய் எட்டி, கிடப்பு நீர் பொருந்தி, இரு திசை விளைந்து, எக்கி, கரை ததும்பி, ஓர் முகம் நோக்கி, குலைந்து, சிதறி...குடை வரைக் கூரையில் சித்திரக் குளம் கண் திறந்தது.

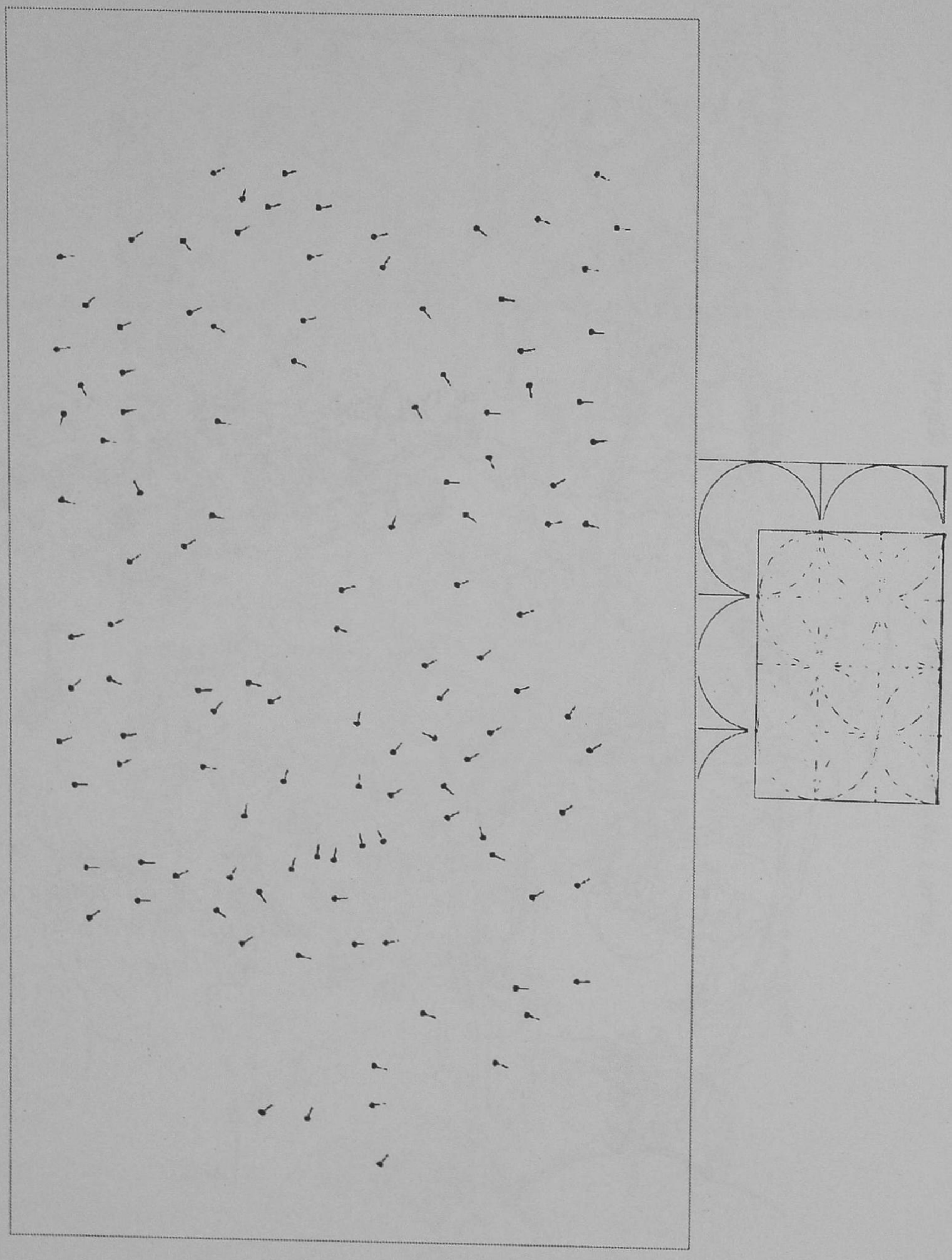
செந்தாமரை, அல்லி, வெண் தாமரை, இலை, மீன், நீர்ப் பறவை, யானை, எருமை, பண்டாரம், முகரம், கூடிய உலா, நீராடல், பாய்ச்சல், கொய்தல் எனப் புலன் வகை ஆரவாரம் ஆழ் மனம் நோக்க....

* முதல்வர், அரசு கவின் கலைக் கல்லூரி, சென்னை-600 003.

படம் 1 தோற்ற வகை முகம் நோக்கும் திசைக் குறிப்பு



படம் 2. நீர் ஓட்டம், தாவரம், பறவை என்பன ஒன்று கலந்த புணை வகை.



சித்திர ஓசை
ஓசை தொட்டு இமை மூடிய விழித்திரை காட்சி வகை கொள்ள, காணும் காட்சி வகையில் ஓசை..... கனைக்கின்றன எருமை, அலர்கின்றன பறவை, விழி, விரல் சுட்டிப் பாடுகின்றனர், பண்டாரம், நீர் தூவி, தழுவி, உறவு மொழிகின்றன பானை தடம் தழும்புகின்றன மீன், திசை நோக்கி மௌனம் கழல்கின்றன தாமரை.. குளமெங்கும் வண்ணத் திட்டுகளில் ஒளி இணை, கிளை தொட்டு பண் இசைக்கின்றன தூரிகை...

சித்தன்ன வாசல்
காட்சித் தோற்ற கட்டமைப்பு
படம் 1 தோற்ற வகை முகம் நோக்கும் திசைக் குறிப்பு
அடிக்குறிப்பு- கட்டமைப்பின் அடிப்படை வடிவக் கோர்வை
மாந்தர், விலங்குகள், காட்சித் தளத்தின் மையப்பகுதியில் வெளிப்பட, குளத்தின் கீழ் வரை நடுநிலையில் துவங்கி தாமரைத் தடம் இரு திசையாக பிரிந்து மேல் நோக்கி, சுழன்று, மேல் வரை மீள்கின்றது.

பெரும் பகுதி உயிரினங்கள் இடது புறம் நோக்க, தாமரை எதிர் முகமாக, தடம் சுழன்று, காட்சித் தளம் முழுவதிலுமான இயக்கத்தில் கலக்கின்றது.

படம் 2. நீர் ஓட்டம், தாவரம், பறவை என்பன ஒன்று கலந்த புணை வகை. இவ் வகை அனுபவம் தாமரைக் குளமாக மலர்ந்தமை விளங்கும்.

அன்றும் இன்றும்
கலை அனுபவ வீதியிலிருந்து, கற்பனைத் தேவதை கொண்டுவந்த தனி நபர்-சமூகம் உறவு கலந்து இன்பமுற, இல்லை என்பதும் இருத்தல் முறித்தது என, மரண பயமற்று யாவற்றிலும் யாசிக்கும் பொழுதும் எடுத்துரைத்தலுமாக கவின் கலை படைப்புகளில் கோரம் தவிர்த்தல் என்பது அன்றும் இன்றும் ஏற்புடையதாக விளங்குகிறது.

TitBits

Marco Polo, a Venetian merchant, set sail in 1271 for China. He saw on his travels lapis - lazuli, a stone being extracted from the quarries of Afghanistan. This blue coloured semi-precious stone was to become an important pigment in Italian painting. - Lakshmi Priya Daniel

மற்றும் பாறைகளில் பாறை ஓவியங்கள் காணக் கிடைக்கின்றன. போபாலில் உள்ள சாமிலா மலைகளில் பாறை ஓவியங்கள் காணக்கிடைக்கின்றன.

தமிழ் நாட்டில் பாறை ஓவியங்கள்

தமிழ் நாட்டில் ஏறத்தாழ 100 இடங்களில் 500க்கும் மேற்பட்ட பாறைகளில் பாறை ஓவியங்கள் காணப்படுகின்றன. நீலகிரி, வேலூர், விழுப்புரம், மதுரை, கோயம்புத்தூர், தருமபுரி, திருநெல்வேலி போன்ற மாவட்டங்களில் பாறை ஓவியங்கள் கண்டுபிடிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. ஜி. கிருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி, பி.எல். சாமி, முனைவர் இரா. மதிவாணன், முனைவர் இரா. பவுன்துரை, பசவலிங்கம் போன்றோர் பல்வேறு பகுதிகளில் பாறையோவியங்களைக் கண்டுபிடித்து நூல் வடிவில் பொதுமக்களின் பார்வைக்குப் பாறை ஓவியங்கள் பற்றிய தகவல்களைக் கொண்டுவந்துள்ளனர். திரு. குடியாத்தம் சுந்தரம் வேலூர் மாவட்டத்தில் கிட்டத்தட்ட 30 இடங்களில் பாறை ஓவியங்களைக் கண்டுபிடித்து அவை பற்றிய தகவல்களை பத்திரிக்கைகளில் வெளியிட்டுப் பணியாற்றியுள்ளார்.

பாறை ஓவியத்தின் பகுதிகள்

பொதுவாக ஓவியத்திற்கு நான்கு பகுதிகள் உண்டு. அவை,

1. தாங்கி (Support)
2. தளம் (Ground)
3. வண்ணம் (Pigment)
4. மேற்பூச்சு (Protective Coating)

பாறை ஓவியம் நேரடியாக பாறையின் மேல் தீட்டப்படுவதால் இதற்குத் தளம் தேவை இல்லை. மட்டுமல்லாது பாறை ஓவியத்திற்கு மேற்பூச்சும் கிடையாது.

பாறையோவியங்களும் பாறைகளும்

பாறையோவியங்கள் படிகப்பாறை (Quartzite), மணற்பாறை (Sandstone), கருங்கற்பாறை (Granite), களிமண் பாறை (Shale), சாம்பல்நிற அடுக்குப்பாறை (Slate) போன்றவற்றில் தீட்டப்பட்டுள்ளன. இவை சுண்ணாம்புக் கல் பாறைகளில் (Limestone) காணப்படவில்லை.

பாறையோவிய வண்ணங்கள்

பாறையோவியங்களில் பொதுவாக மஞ்சள், வெள்ளை, சிகப்பு அல்லது கருப்பு ஆகிய வண்ணங்கள் காணக் கிடைக்கின்றன. இவை பெரும்பாலும் தாதுக்களிலிருந்து கிடைக்கும் வண்ணங்கள் ஆகும். இவை நீர், வெளிச்சம் ஆகியவற்றால் மங்காத தன்மையுடையவை. ஆகவேதான் இன்றும் பாறையோவியங்கள் பளிச்சென்று காணப்படுகின்றன. சில தாவரங்களிலிருந்து கிடைக்கப்பட்ட வண்ணங்களும் உண்டு.

வண்ணங்களும் அவற்றின் பெயர்களும்

பாறையோவியங்களில் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்ட வண்ணங்கள் பொதுவாக தாதுக்களாகும். இவை பெரும்பாலும் பாறையோவியங்கள் காணப்படும் பகுதிகளிலிருந்தே பெறப்பட்டவையாகும்.

வெள்ளை - Kaolin
மஞ்சள் - Iron hydroxide
சிகப்பு - Iron oxide
பச்சை - Malachite
நீலம் - Lapis lazuli
கருப்பு - Carbon, Magnesium oxide

வண்ணங்களின் தாங்கி

பாறையோவியங்களிலுள்ள வண்ணங்களைத் தாங்குவது நீராகும். வண்ணப் பொடிகளை நன்கு நீருடன் மெல்லிய கூழாக அறைத்து, குழம்பாக்கி வண்ணமாகப் பயன்படுத்தியுள்ளனர். சில வேளைகளில் சில தாவரங்களின் சாறும் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளது.

சுவரோவியங்கள்

பாறையோவியங்களைத் தொடர்ந்து சுவரோவியங்கள் தீட்டப்பட்டன. சுவரோவியங்கள் இரண்டு வகைப்படும். அவை, ஈரச் சுவரோவியம் (Fresco Buno), உலர் சுவரோவியம் (Fresco Secco) ஆகும்.

ஈரச் சுவரோவியம் (Fresco Buno)

முதலில் கற்சுவர் அல்லது பாறைமீது சுரசுரப்பான காரைச் சாந்து பூசி, அதன் மீது மெல்லிய சுண்ணாம்புக் கரைசல் பூசி சிறிதளவு உலர்த்துவர். உலர்ந்து வருங்கால், நீரில் அல்லது தாவரங்களின் சாற்றில் வண்ணங்களைக் கலந்து ஓவியம் தீட்டுவர்.. இம் முறையில் செய்யப்பட்ட ஓவியங்கள் ஈரச் சுவரோவியங்கள் எனப்படும்.

உலர் சுவரோவியங்கள் (Fresco Secco)

சுவற்றில் பூசிய காரை உலர்ந்த பின் வண்ணம் பூசி வரையும் ஓவியம் உலர் சுவரோவியமாகும். இந்தியாவில் இவ் விதமான ஓவியங்கள் தான் உள்ளன.

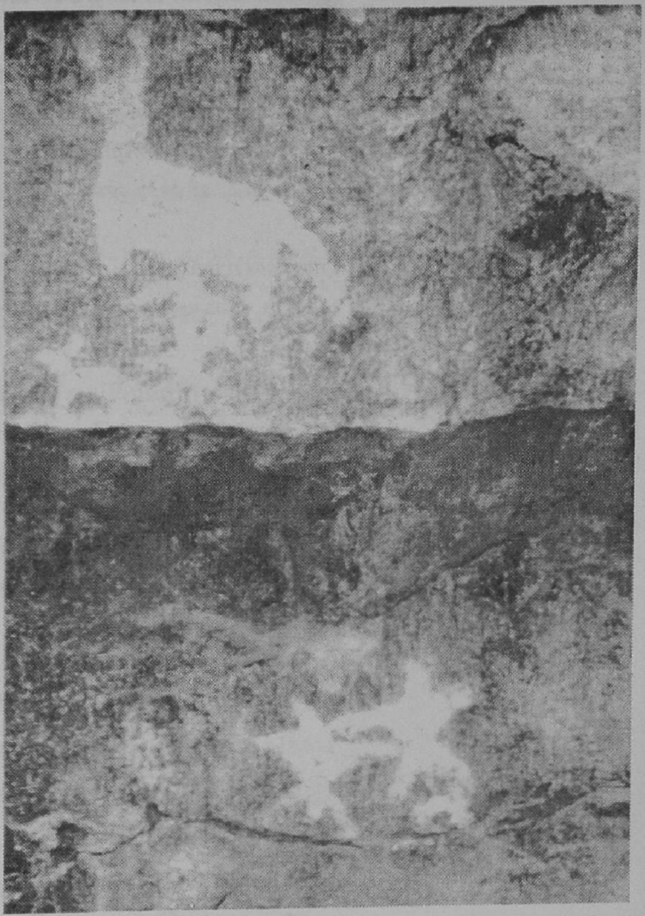
பாறையோவியங்களின் சிதைவும் காரணங்களும்

பாறையோவியங்கள் பெரும்பாலானவை இன்று சிதைந்து காணக் கிடைக்கின்றன.

சிதைவிற்கு பல்வேறு காரணங்கள் உண்டு. ஓவியங்கள் மீது பாசி படிதல், பூமியிலிருந்து உறிஞ்சப்படும் அல்லது நீர்க்கசிவினால் சேகரிக்கப்படும் உப்பினால் சிதைதல், தட்ப வெப்ப மாற்றத்தால் பாறையுடைந்து சிதறுதல், நீர் வடிவதால் தேய்தல், தூசு மற்றும் அழுக்கினால் மங்குதல், மனிதனால் சிதைதல் எனப் பல காரணங்களைக் கூறலாம்.

பாதுகாப்பு முறைகள்

பாறை ஓவியங்களைப் பாதுகாப்பதில் தனிக் கவனம் தேவை. பாறை ஓவியங்கள் தொடர்பான ஆய்வுகள் அதிகம் செய்யப்படவில்லை. இருப்பினும் இருக்கின்ற தகவல்களின் அடிப்படையில் பாறையோவியங்களை மூன்று விதங்களில் பாதுகாக்கலாம்.



1. பொதுவான தூய்மை செய்தல்
2. நுண்ணியிரிகளை அகற்றுதல்
3. சிதைந்த பகுதிகளை உறுதிப்படுத்தலும் மேற்பூச்சு பூசுதலும் ஆகும்.

எந்த பாதுகாப்பு முறைகளைப் பின்பற்றினாலும் பாதுகாப்பு நடவடிக்கைகள் மேற்கொளவதற்கு முன்னரே ஆவணப்படுத்துதல் மிக முக்கியம். டொலுயூன் (Toluene), மெதனால் (Methanol), அசிட்டோன் (Acetone), டை ஈதைல் ஈதர் (Diethyl ether), எதிலின் கிளைக்கால் (Ethylene glycol) போன்ற கரைப்பான்களைப் பயன்படுத்திப் பாறை ஓவியங்களைத் தூய்மைப்படுத்தலாம். விளக்குக் கரியை 1:20 என்ற விகிதத்தில் கலந்த ட்ரை எதனால் அமின் (Tri ethanol amine) மற்றும் எதில் ஆல்கஹால் (Ethyl alcohol) கொண்டு அகற்றலாம். பாசி, பூஞ்சை போன்றவற்றை நீரும் ஆல்கஹாலும் கலந்த அமோனியா பூசி அகற்றலாம். கறைகள் இருந்தால் ஹைடிரஜன் பெராக்ஸைடு (Hydrogen peroxide) கொண்டு அகற்றலாம்.

பாறை ஓவியங்களின் காலக் கணக்கீடு

பொதுவாக, காலக் கணக்கீடு என்பது எளிதன்று. பல்வேறு முறைகளைக் கையாண்டுதான் காலக் கணக்கீடு செய்தல் வேண்டும். ஒரு ஓவியத்தின் வரைவு பாணியைக் கொண்டு ஓவியங்களை ஒப்பிட்டு அவற்றின் கால உறவைக் கணக்கிடலாம். இன்று கோடுகளின் வரைவமைதியைக் கொண்டு தமிழ்நாட்டுப் பாறை ஓவியங்கள் சிந்துச் சமவெளி நாகரிக வரைவுகளுடன் ஒத்து நோக்கப்படும் அளவில் இருக்கின்றன. பாறையோவியங்கள் பல்வேறு முறைகளில் கணக்கிடப்படுகின்றன.

1. நுண்ணிய தேய்வு கணக்கீடு
2. பாரம்பரிய பாசிக் கணக்கீடு
3. படிந்துள்ள தாதுக்களின் கணக்கீடு
4. வண்ணங்களின் ஆய்வு கணக்கீடு
5. ஒளியின் தன்மையை வைத்து கணக்கீடு.

பாதுகாப்பில் நமது கடமை

பாறை ஓவியங்களைப் பாதுகாப்பதில் பல்வேறு பணிகள் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட வேண்டும்.

1. பாறையோவியங்கள் உள்ள இடங்களை அடையாளம் கண்டு வைக்கலாம்.
2. நமது பாறையோவியங்களைப் படமாக்கி ஆவணப்படுத்தி வைக்கலாம்.
3. பாதுகாக்கிறோம் என்ற எண்ணத்தில் அவற்றை அழிக்காமல் இருத்தல் அவசியம்.
4. பாதுகாப்பு என்ற கருத்தை மக்களுக்குள் பரப்புதல் வேண்டும்.
5. ஓவியங்கள் பாதுகாத்திட ஏதுவாக உரிய பயிற்சி அளித்தல் வேண்டும்.

முடிவுரை

பாறையோவியங்கள் எளிதில் அழிவதில்லை. ஆனால் மனிதர்களால் அதிகம் பாதிக்கப்படுகின்றன. பாறையோவியங்கள் உள்ள இடங்களைப் பாதுகாத்திட மக்கள் இயக்கங்கள் முன்வரவேண்டும். பாதுகாக்கும் பொறுப்பை தன்னார்வத் தொண்டு நிறுவனங்களிடம் ஒப்படைக்கலாம். இந்திய தொல்லியல் ஆய்வுத்துறை மற்றும் தமிழ்நாடு தொல்லியல் துறை போன்ற நிறுவனங்களுடன் இணைந்து பாறை ஓவியங்கள் இருக்கும் இடங்களைப் பாதுகாக்கலாம். எனினும் பாதுகாப்பாளர்களை அதிகம் உருவாக்குதலும் வேண்டும்.

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லியானார்டோ டாவின்சியின் மோனா லிசா ஓவியம்

வினோதமானதும் ரகசியங்களை உள்ளடக்கியதுமான 77 x 53 செ.மீ. அளவுள்ள பாப்லார் என்ற மரப் பலகையில் லியானார்டோ டாவின்சியால் தீட்டப்பட்டதுதான் மோனா லிசா என்ற எண்ணெய் வண்ண ஓவியம் ஆகும். தொடக்கத்தில் இன்றுள்ளதை விட இவ்வோவியம் சற்றுப் பெரிதாக இருந்தது. இரு பக்கங்களிலும் பின்னர் வெட்டப்பட்டதால் இன்று சிறிதாகி விட்டது. அதனால் தான் மோனா லிசா மாடியில் உட்கார்ந்து கொண்டிருப்பதை எளிதில் அறிய முடியவில்லை.

பல்வேறு பகுதிகள் நன்கு தெரியதில்லை என்பது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது. ஏனென்றால் இவ்வோவியம் பகுதியாக பாதிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. மேலும் சில பகுதிகளில் சிதைந்த இடங்களில் புதிதாக வண்ணம் தீட்டப்பட்டுள்ளது.

TitBits

Leonardo Da Vinci - A true "Renaissance Man" that he was a great painter is well known. He was also a sculptor, an architect, an imventor, an engineer and an expert in botany, anatomy and geology. His innumerable drawings and designs include war machines, studies of foetuses in the womb to renderings of the "ideal man'. - Lakshmi Priya Daniel.

3

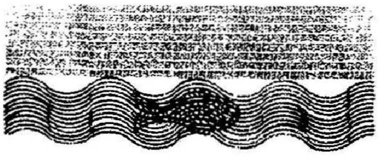
Symbolism in Art

* Shakuntala Ramani

Symbols are the earliest manifestations of the human spirit. Long before man learnt to write or speak, it was the symbol that came to his aid, to communicate, to express, or just to give vent to his secret fears and longings. This need to express, is inherent in the human race and sets man apart from other living beings. The cognition of an inner self and the urge to give vent to inner aspirations and a spiritual longing, far removed from the mundane activities of seeking food and shelter, is the one quality which characterizes human beings. It is this quality which has resulted in the blossoming of pictorial art forms, literature, music, dance and various forms of worship.

The power of the symbol, lies in the fact, that it needs no elaboration, and communicates with immediate impact. Symbols transcend language and geographical boundaries. Symbols have become so much part of the human psyche that a simple diagram can convey an entire gamut of emotions. It is this power to communicate, transcending peoples and places, that makes the symbol a most powerful instrument in the field of art.

Why do we need symbols? We need them first of all, to convey thought. Just like an IBM machine transforms information to holes in a card, human imagination requires simple forms, it can store and codify. On a deeper level, symbols provide reassurance in a hostile world through their mystic presence.



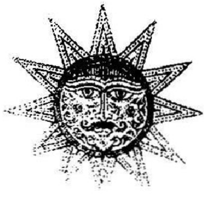


Fig. 1

Early man, in his fight for survival in a strange and inhospitable world invented supernatural beings out of natural phenomenon investing them with magic power and anthropomorphic forms, holding weapons which symbolized the objects he dreaded in real life. By visualizing them as friendly divine beings be felt secure for he could propitiate them with prayer and keep them on his side.

* Chair Person, Kalakshetra, Chennai

For example, the disc which represented the sun, became by association, the source of warmth and life. Glowing with a fiery brilliance in the firmament, it became a divinity and an unfailing source of sustanence in everyday life. Day surely followed night, and the divine sun was always there, amidst the thunder and storm and fears of the unknown darkness.

The symbol of the Sun God is therefore present in almost all cultures of the world as a benign divinity. SURYA, the Sun God in Hindu mythology is sometimes linked to SOMA, the moon. SOMA derives its light from the SUN, and it is believed that when the Moon wanes, the Sun God sustains him with water from the Ocean. It is this symbology that is depicted in a folk painting, from the Saurashtra region.

Another pictorial representation of the Sun is the Persian symbol, for light and truth as embodied in MITHRAS (Fig.2). The powerful MITHRAS is shown with swirling flames all around his face. The symbolism of the sun occurs again and again in many forms in almost all the cultures. It is depicted as the divine orb, which sees all and knows all. In Greek mythology the Sun is Helios, the eye of Zeus. In Egypt it is the eye of Ra, and in Islam it is the eye of Allah. The symbolism of the Sun is therefore almost always depicted with eyes. Another pictorial representation in Hindu mythology is the figure of the Sun God riding in a chariot drawn by seven horses. It is interesting that the imagery was conceived with SEVEN horses, long before science came up with the theory that the light of the Sun consisted of seven colours.

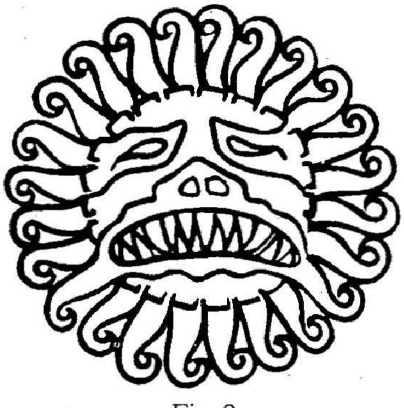


Fig. 2

Symbolic drawings which develop out of atavistic fear of the unknown, of sickness and death, are still a part of ritual and religion and an intrinsic part of life in the villages. One has only to travel down any village road in India to see the plethora of symbolic designs that decorate the walls and thresholds of the humblest of dwellings. Huts plastered with clay and dung are decorated with mystic symbols invoking the Goddess of wealth or the protection of powerful deities to guard the dwelling. One such divinity is the figure of Shitalama worshipped in Gujarat villages for protection against the dreaded disease,

small pox. In the drawing illustrated here (Fig 3) the Goddess of small pox, Shitalama has been drawn on the back wall of a niche which contains stored water. The figures of Shitalama are shown on either side of the cradle holding a child. Two Swastika symbols have also been drawn to augment protection and ensure good luck. With such strong visual symbols the simple housewife was sure that the mighty "Shitalama" would pass harmlessly by her house and not harm her loved ones, because she was duly worshipped.

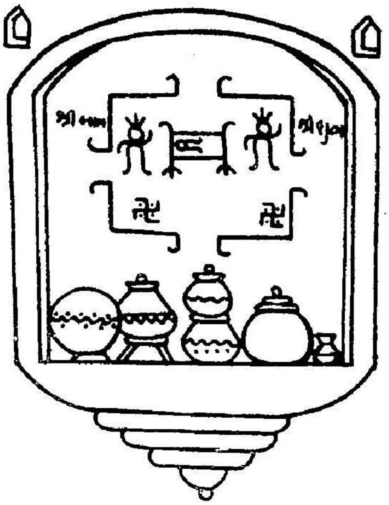


Fig. 3

Remarkably similar to this drawing, is that of another ritual North American drawing depicting the Goddess of sickness. An animal body is attached to the face of this divinity which has three protuberances on the head like the Indian one (Fig 4).

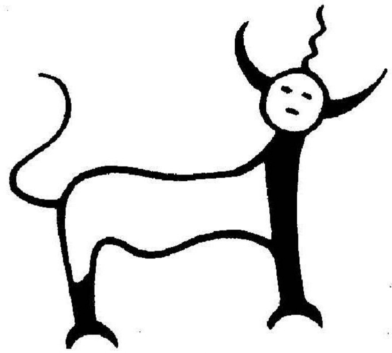


Fig. 4

Symbolic art, it is obvious, is an universal language and people react to perceived dangers in nature, in similar ways. A powerful symbol which evokes universal feeling of awe, is that of the snake. The venomous snake is symbolized both as an evil and as a benevolent spirit. Indian mythology is replete with drawings of the snake draped around the neck of Siva, around the round belly of Ganesa: or coiled as a bed for Maha Vishnu. The snake is an ever present symbol in all cultures whether Hindu, Muslim or Christian. From the serpent in the Garden of Eden, picturised in the Bible, to the serpentine locks of Medusa in Greek mythology, and as a powerful talisman in the tombs of Egypt, this symbol, by its sinuous form lends itself to artistic and decorative representation in many ways.

Not merely in religious art but also in modern painting the snake form has been exploited to convey many moods by present day artists. In this illustration, an ink drawing by the late artist, Sultan Ali entitled "NAVA SEERA", the nine headed serpent is shown as a mystic

force for creation (Fig.5). There is a superstition in Indian villages that propitiating snakes will endow childless couples with progeny. It is this concept which has been illustrated by the artist in the drawing.

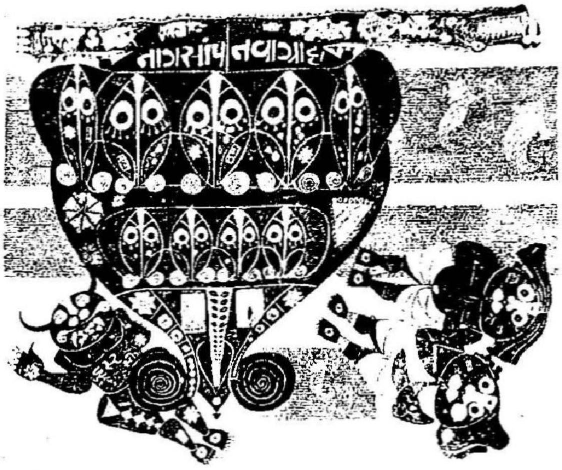


Fig. 5

Sultan Ali also had a penchant for the figure of the bull which according to him represented great strength and energy. He uses the symbol of the bull in many paintings to evoke a sense of power as is seen in this drawing (Fig. 6).

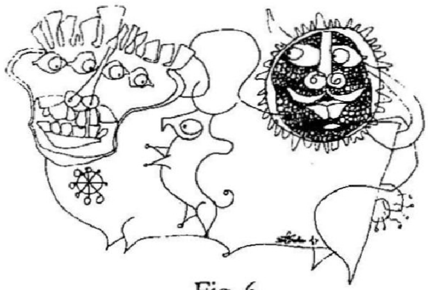


Fig. 6

Animals and birds are used as symbols to augment artistic imaging in a variety of ways. The symbol of the tree is a favourite motif both in ancient and modern art forms. The "Vrikshaka" was a favourite theme with artist S.G.Vasudev who used it to symbolize man's total being "Sarirarvrksha" the body tree the microcosm in its physical (sthula) as well as subtle (sukshma) form in his paintings and metal reliefs.

The "Tree of Life" is central to the religious art of Persia also. While in Indian mythology the "Vrikshaka" symbolizes all creation, the concept of the tree with its roots plunging deep into the earth and branches reaching upto heaven, symbolizes immortality in Moghul art. In this illustration of an old Kalamkari painting, the Tree of life is shown with all forms of life sheltering in its branches and below the roots. (Fig.7). Birds are associated with free sprits who do not allow life to bind them down. The peacock is symbolic of divine power which conquers evil, represented by the serpent dangling

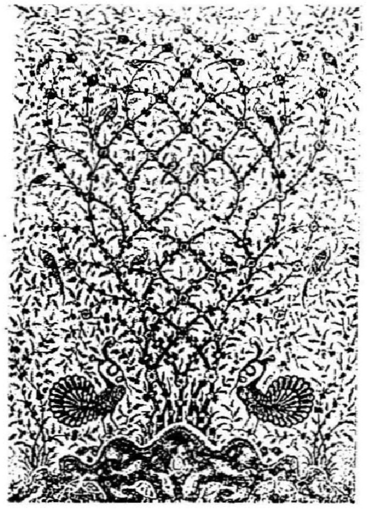


Fig. 7

from its beak. The Cosmic Tree thus symbolizes the triumph of good over evil. Its spans the three worlds and in Iranian mythology is said to bestow immortality and is a favourite design for prayer mats.

Similarly the Bodhi tree is a symbol which represents Buddha in many paintings. Symbolism has been a powerful tool in the hands of artists, spanning the centuries to convey deep spiritual and philosophical truths behind the graphic image.

Everyone responds to symbols. Take the symbol of the National flag, the various symbols of state, of authority, the royal umbrella or the sceptre. A symbol is the instrument by which we conceive an object and give it meaning. A symbol conveys the message or an edict without words.

The symbol of the cross, for example, can convey a variety of feelings. In the mundane sense, the painting of a red cross is a sign of medical help, of succour in distress. A cross can also mean a plus sign or a multiplying sign in arithmetic. It is important to understand that symbols are different from signs. Symbols transcend conscious reality and touch upon the subconscious, while signs are used for a specific purpose and clearly mean only one thing.

Thus the sign, of the cross, a simple geometric figure of two crossed lines, in Christian religion, becomes a powerful symbol. It brings to mind immediately, the figure of a saint brutally nailed to a cross of wood, left there to suffer and die, but in the course of his suffering, speaking words which formed the basis of an entire philosophy of life.

In our own times we have seen the triumph of the symbol of the "Charkha" which Mahatma Gandhi used so effectively to unite an entire nation.
Symbols therefore open up levels of meaning and significance which are otherwise not perceived. In art forms they convey great vistas of imagination which transcends and transforms the outer form. Life will be richer if we seek out the symbols that mean most to us and live by them.

TitBits

Pope Julius II patronized the arts and commissioned the sculptor, Michelangelo, to paint the Sistine Chapel. - Lakshmi Priya Daniel

Folk Bronzes of Western Tamil Nadu

Dr. C. Maheswaran *

Introduction

The art of bronze casting in India is dated back to the Indus Valley period and consequently the chronology wherein the bronze artefacts get emerged in the annals of human civilisation is designated aptly as the 'bronze age'. Generally, the bronze casting by the lost wax process (technically known as 'cire perdue') is dichotomised into 'solid casting' and 'hollow casting'[1].

The term 'folk bronzes' could be applied to a set of bronzes, which have been fashioned by indigenous (folk) people without adopting any codified iconometric and or iconographic formulae. The figurine of mother goddess that has been unearthed from Adichanallur (datable to 7th century B.C.) of Thirunelveli District is attested as the first bronze of Tamil Nadu.[2]

Interestingly, the bronzes that are in utility among the tribal people are also designated as 'folk bronzes' as they are crafted mostly by artisans belonging to non-tribal stock[3]. And hence, the terms 'tribal bronzes' and 'folk bronzes' are found to be used interchangeably while dealing with the metal craft of the tribes.

Household articles, objects of votive offerings, ritual objects, etc., constitute the folk bronzes. In Tamil Nadu also the tradition of crafting folk bronzes and utilizing them in both their sacred and secular domains by the rural people is visualized.

With these backgrounds, an attempt is made in this paper to present an account of the folk bronzes that are in use among the various indigenous (caste) groups of Western Tamil Nadu like Kongu Vettuvar, Kongu Kulalar and Kongu Vellalar inhabiting the districts of Namakkal, Salem, Erode, Karur and Coimbatore.

Ethnographic Settings of Western Tamil Nadu - A Brief Note

The Western Tamil Nadu (that constitutes a major portion of the erstwhile Kongu Nadu) is composed of the districts such as Coimbatore, Karur, Erode, Salem, Namakkal under

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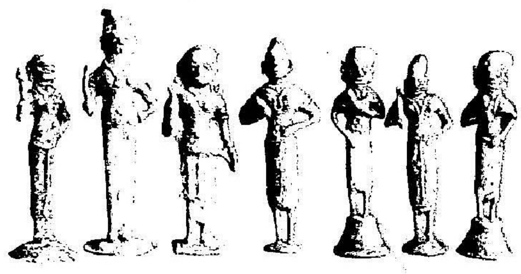
its fold. It is inhabited by indigenous people like Sholagar, Urali Kurumbar, Malai Gounder[4], Lambadi under the tribal stock while Vettuvar Vellalar, Kulalar, Shanar, Navidhar, Pallar, Paraiyar, under the non-tribal stock and the non-tribal indigenous endogamous (i.e. caste) groups bear an attribute 'Kongu' along with their ethnonym and thereby they are designated as Kongu Vettuvar, Kongu Vellalar, Kongu Kulalar, Kongu Shanar, Kongu Navidhar, Kongu Pallar, Kongu Paraiyar[5].

Among them, the Kongu Vettuvar (the then hunters of Kongu region) became settled cultivators quite a long time back; the Kongu Kulalar, the potters who get settled in the Kongu Nadu were acculturated with the local dominant community, viz. Kongu Vellalar; And these Kongu Vellalar, the settled agriculturalists play a major role in the district economy, by nurturing it with their hard labour. Interestingly, all these three ethnic groups are identified to possess folk bronzes of anthropomorphic forms either as clan deities or as objects of votive offerings.

Anthropomorphic Folk Bronzes of Kongu Vettuvar, Kongu Kulalar & Kongu Vellalar

Anthropomorphic Folk Bronzes of Kongu Vettuvar



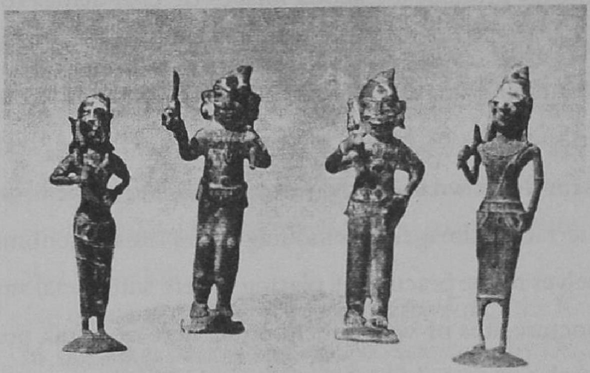
The Kongu Vettuvars who originally hailed from Vazhavandhi of the Namakkal District while migrating to other parts of the Kongu Nadu have deposited their anthropomorphic clan deities of folk bronze figurines in an earthern urn, with a vow that they will assemble in the hamlet during 'Chitra Paurnami' (i.e. full moon day of 'Chithirai' annually to observe their cultural reminiscences. Accordingly, they gather at Vazhavandhi on every 'Chitra Paurnami', observe worshipping their clan images and then leave for the hamlet of their present habitation (, leaving behind their clan deities). The Kongu Vettuvar who take care of those clan deities of anthropomorphic folk bronzes were honoured during this annual religious observances by others for their service to the community[6].

Anthropomorphic Folk Bronzes of Kongu Kulalar

The Kongu Kulalar who have been forced by their situation to migrate and settle at the erstwhile Kongu region[7] at present inhabit various parts of the Western Tamil Nadu such

as 'Kanjikoil Naadu', 'Poondurai Naadu'. As the numbers of their folk deities are quite a few, they make an agreement among themselves to take in possession of them in cyclic order of six months per hamlet. It is interesting to note that the Kongu Kulalars of each hamlet will plan, fix and celebrate auspicious occasions such as puberty rites, marriage rites, pre-natal rites within this span of time. Special worship will be performed while handing over the clan deities to another hamlet. A communal feast will also be offered to the party who has come to receive the clan deities in the form of anthropomorphic folk bronzes. Likewise, the second hamlet will also observe special worship to these clan deities after installing them in their temple premises. A communal feast is also offered to the party from the previous hamlet who accompanied those folk bronzes.

Anthropomorphic Folk Bronzes of Kongu Vellalar



Folk bronzes of anthropomorphic form are also in vogue among the Kongu Vellalar. But, contrary to the practices of both Kongu Vettuvar and Kongu Kulalar, Kongu Vellalar submit anthropomorphic folk bronzes as votive offerings in fulfilling their vow for begetting children. For instance, the Kongu Vellalar of Veerapaandi (in the Salem District) offer folk bronzes of male anthropomorphic form, if they beget male offsprings and female anthropomorphic forms if they be get female offsprings[8]. The Kongu Kulalar of Mel Urandhai near Karur are in the habit of offering male anthropomorphic folk bronzes if they beget male offsprings by adhering a religious observance called 'kadum thavam' (Lit. "severe penance")[9]. And all these folk bronzes are kept in safe custody at 'saami veedu' (Lit. "god's house").

Significance of the Anthropomorphic Folk Bronzes of Western Tamil Nadu

The anthropomorphic folk bronzes of Western Tamil Nadu discussed so far bear physiognomic depictions, culminating in vase-like hinder protion[10]. And these folk bronzes are realized as significant objects of tangible cultural heritage on several grounds as given below:

i. First of all, they throw more light on the artistic and aesthetic heritage of Western Tamil Nadu (, the erstwhile 'Kongu Nadu', as they are fashioned and crafted by one of the 'Panchakammaalar' of the Kongu region, on the request of the indigenous Kongu communities like Kongu Vettuvar, Kongu Kulalar, Kongu Vellalar.

ii. The Kongu Vettuvar undergo periodic migration while their clan deities (in the form anthropomorphic folk bronzes) remain sedantary. Contrary to this, among the Kongu Kulalar the clan deities (in the form of anthropomorphic folk bronzes) undergo cyclic migrations while the people remain in their respective hamlets. This gives us a clue that the Kongu Vettuvar are native to the Kongu soil[9] as their clan deities remained in one place) while the Kongu Kulalar are settlers to it (as their clan deities undertake entourage).

iii. It is interesting to observe that the Kongu Kulalar (the traditional potters of Kongu region) who produce terracotta images of clan deities to other communities of the region on their request are in the habit of placing orders for casting of folk bronze icons for their own need to folk artisans. Enquiries revealed that the Kongu Kulalar were in the habit of producing themselves only the terracotta images of their clan deities for their own use in the yester years. And as the occasional damages occurred to those terracotta images on entourage have caused sentimental outbreak, they shifted themselves to the practice of placing orders with metal smiths to cast folk bronzes. In this juncture, it is of worth mentioning here of a folk bronze figurine of the Kongu Kulalar shown seated over an inverted pot.

Conclusion

Although folk bronzes in anthropomorphic forms are attested among the Kongu Vettuvar, the Kongu Kulalar and the Kongu Vellalar the practice of offering them as 'figurines for worship' or as 'figurines for votive offering' could help us to draw the differentiating line. And hence, from such differentiating line we may conjecture that the use of anthropomorphic folk bronzes as objects of votive offering among the Kongu Vellar might have originated by adopting the actual practice of up keeping of such folk bronzes as clan deities by other two Kongu communities, viz. the Kongu Vettuvar and the Kongu Kulalar.

More over, as the observance of offering of the folk bronzes of anthropomorphic forms are not attested among all the sects of the Kongu Vellalar but only in Veerapaandi (of the Salem District) and Mel Urandhai (of the Karur District) this conjecture gets strengthened further.

Foot Notes

1. Yet another practice of bronze casting known as 'piece moulding' is also prevalent which has been carried out quite rarely and that too for robust bronzes only.
2. Contrary to this, the tradition of casting classical bronzes is first attested in Pallava period and found to continue through the ages; Of them, the 'Chola bronzes' are construed as the finest specimens of art by the art historians.
3. However, we should bear in mind that the tribal people are also found at crafting of bronze icons, especially in the Central Indian belt.
4. This ethnic group tries to get recognition as the 'Malaiyali Tribes', on par with other Malaiyali Tribes of Cuddalore, Vellore, Salem, Dharmapuri and Thiruchirapalli districts of Tamil Nadu.
5. Ethnonymn, the nomenclature of an ethnic group is normally dual in nature, viz. the name preferred by the ethnic group (i.e., the insiders) and the one preferred by other ethnic groups (i.e. the outsiders). For instance, the Kongu Shanars prefer to be addressed as 'Mooppan' while the outsiders refer them as' Shanar'; like wise, the 'Kongu Pallar' and the 'Kongu Paraiyar' prefer to be designated as 'Daevaendhirar' and 'Saambaan' respectively.
6. Steps have been taken to register these folk bronzes by the State Department of Archaeology under the Indian Antiquities Preservation Act for a long time. But, this venture could not have fructified as the Kongu Vettuvar of Vazhavandhi (of the Namakkal District) have not taken up even the requisite initiatives towards this direction.

7 For details cf. "Madhirkkaraip Pattayam of the Kongu Kulalar" that has appeared in the *Kongu Naattu Samudhaaya Aavanangal* by Dr. S. Raju.

8 Out of 36 such folk bronzes the authorities of Kaaroor Amman temple of Veerapaandi (, Salem District) have gifted a dozen specimens to the various museums of the Erode District such as Government Museum, Erode, Kalaimagal Kalvi Nilaiyam Archaeological Museum, Erode, History Museum of the Vellalar College for Women, Erode.

9 Personal communications from Dr. S. Raju, Convener, Kongu Research Centre, Erode.

10 This reminds us the emerging of spirits/deities from their abode of tree, observe rightly the Cultural Anthropologists.

TitBits

Artemisia Gentilleschi, Rachel Ruysch and Judith Leyster are the names of women artists who did paintings in the Baroque period in the 17th century. - Lakshmi Priya Daniel

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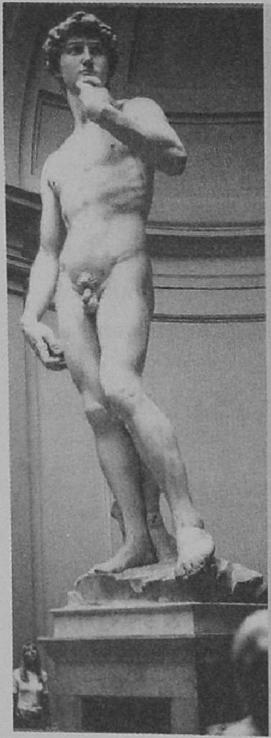


"நான் ஓவியங்களைப் போற்றுவோரின் அழுத்தங்களுக்குள் வாழ முடியாது. என்னை ஓவியம் தீட்ட விடுங்கள்" - மைக்கல் ஏஞ்சலோ, வாசரி எழுதிய ஓவியர்களின் வாழ்க்கை என்ற நூலிலிருந்து

தாவீது என்ற 4.34 மீட்டர் (14 அடி 3 அங்குலம்) உயரமான பிரமாண்டமான சலவைக் கற்சிற்பம் 1501-ல் மைக்கல் ஏஞ்சலோவால் தொடங்கப்பட்டு 1504-ல் தீட்டி முடிக்கப் பட்டு பாலஸோ வெக்கியோ என்ற அரண்மனைக்கு வெளியே வைக்கப்பட்டது. பிளாரன்ஸ் நாட்டு குடியரசுகளின் அதிகாரம் மற்றும் தீர்மானங்களைப் பிரதிபலிப்பதற்காகச் செதுக்கப்பட்டதாகக் கொள்ளலாம். எனவே இது மெடிசிஸ் ஆதரவாளர்களால் எப்பொழுதுமே தாக்கப்பட்டுக் கொண்டே இருந்தது. 19-ம் நூற்றாண்டுவாக்கில் இச்சிற்பம் அக்காடமியா என்ற இடத்திற்கு இடமாற்றம் செய்யப்பட்டது. இன்று தாவீது என்ற அச் சிற்பத்தின் சுதை மாதிரி இலண்டனிலுள்ள விக்டோரியா மற்றும் ஆல்பர்ட் அருங்காட்சியகத்தில் காட்சிப்படுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளது.

சென்னை அரசு அருங்காட்சியக வேதியியப் பிரிவுகாப்பாட்சியர், முனைவர் வே. ஜெயராஜ் தொகுத்து எழுதிய தமிழ்நாட்டில் அருங்காட்சியகங்கள், காட்சிக் கூடங்கள் மற்றும் நினைவகங்களின் தொகுப்பு என்ற நூலை சென்னை அரசு அருங்காட்சியகம் வெளியிட்டுள்ளது. அந்நூலில் தமிழ்நாட்டிலுள்ள அருங்காட்சியகங்கள், காட்சிக் கூடங்கள் மற்றும் நினைவகங்கள் பற்றிய தகவல்கள் காணப்படுகின்றன. இதன் விலை ரூ 130./- ஆகும். வெள்ளி மற்றும் தேசிய விடுமுறை நாட்கள் தவிர பிற நாட்களில் காலை 9.30 முதல் மாலை 5.00 மணி வரை இந்நூலை அரசு அருங்காட்சியக விற்பனைக் கூடத்தில் விலைக்குப் பெறலாம்.

5

The Bovine Principle

*Ms. Chandra Ilango **

Artist A. V. Ilango, hails from a little town called Gobichettipalayam in Tamil Nadu. The rural background has left indelible impressions in his formative years. In India, art, culture, religion and rituals are interwoven in daily life. There is a very fine line that separates Indian aesthetics and Hindu rituals.

In traditional visual and performing arts, symbolism renders the classical arts more appealing for the initiated and the erudite while the folk arts are integrated by all in festivities. Ilango traces the bovine form and symbol as an idiom that is closely related to man from Prehistory to Modern era.

Prehistory

The caveman's preoccupation was the animal. Fright, flight or fight was his reactions. He adorned rock surfaces and caves with larger than life images of bison, bulls, horses ... That overwhelming emotion, made him eternalise the animal images rendered in stone, clay and later metal. Thus began primitive religion and rituals. We retrace the history of art from that era. The early man's interest in nature was followed by later civilizations. Of the formal elements of art, style became very important. It defined, distinguished and venerated certain styles by individual artists or artisans or the epoch as a whole.

When early man evolved in his lifestyle, from hunting and gathering to agriculture and herding, he domesticated the very animals that once held him in awe or fear. In the Indus Valley civilization, namely, Harappa and Mohanjodaro, the bovine forms of bull, cow and buffalo were extensively exploited in rituals, artefacts and coins.

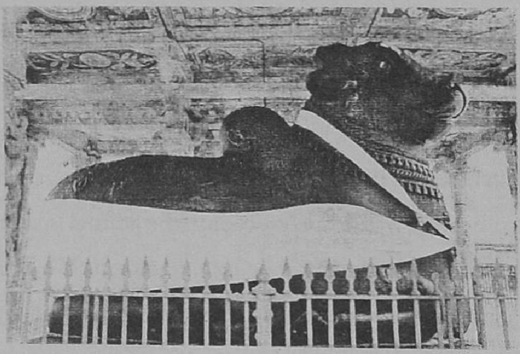
The bulls in India have arched horns, a prominent hump, wavy dewlaps and slender legs bearing a well-shaped torso. The eyes are well defined and the head is a little elongated. The bovine creatures symbolised a certain human quality or divine power as conceived by the ancient people. It is based on a belief system that dates back to thousands of years and may be unintelligible or incomprehensible for most outsiders, and even to some native

* *Professor in French, Chennai.*

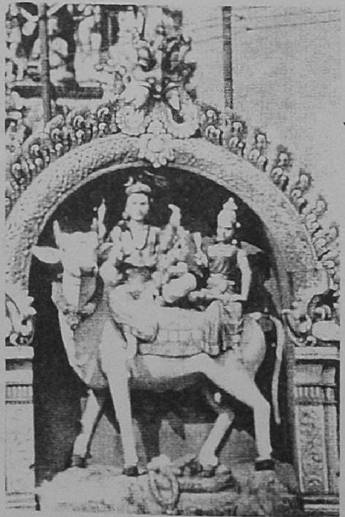
ones. For those with deep convictions, there are codified aesthetics and systemic intelligence in all the symbolic interpretations.

Mythology Religion, Ritualism

The Indian mythology is amazingly vast, spanning antiquity and today. Interlaced in the Hindu religion, festivals commemorate mythological events and legends all over India. It is the high degree of imagination of our ancient forefathers that fascinates the modern man. In the hymns of the Vedic Age (c 1500 - 600 BC), the bull is alluded with human qualities. In the Rig Veda, it is exalted as an archetype, a symbol of virility and fertility. The prowess of Vedic gods like Indra, Varuna, Soma, Agni, Brahaspati, Surya, Rudra and Maruts are credited with metaphysical bovine qualities of strength, courage, masculinity, fertility and rejuvenation. The bull is attributed with other spiritual qualities of sacrifice (Yajna), universal order (Rita). According to Manusmriti, it represents the principle of righteousness (Dharma). For this reason, several dynasties in India adopted the bull form in their insignia, coins ... to indicate their adherence to the great principle of royal conduct.

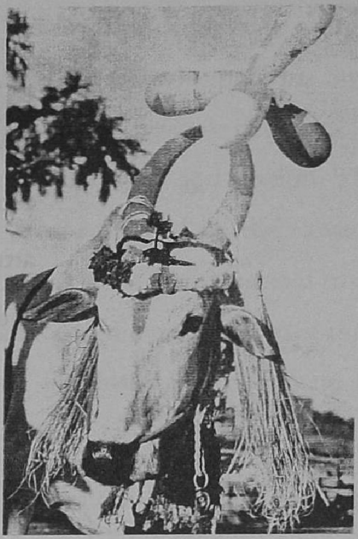


The seated bull or Nandhi, facing the Lingam or Siva in his pristine abstract form, is the mascot. The Saivite believer assumes his devotion is as irrevocable like the Nandhi in total submission and with steadfast gaze on the Redeemer. Siva is also seen riding or seated on the bull (Rishaba vahana) or the Kamadhenu. There are some medieval temples in South India, eg. the Brahadeeswara Temple at Thanjavur, where the monolithic nandhi is consecrated to a shrine of its own in line with the main sanctum sanctorum.



The mythological cow or Kamadhenu emerged from the churning of the ocean, Samudramanthan. It is a divine creature embodying a woman's head, bovine torso and legs and also wings and tail of a bird. This surrealistic

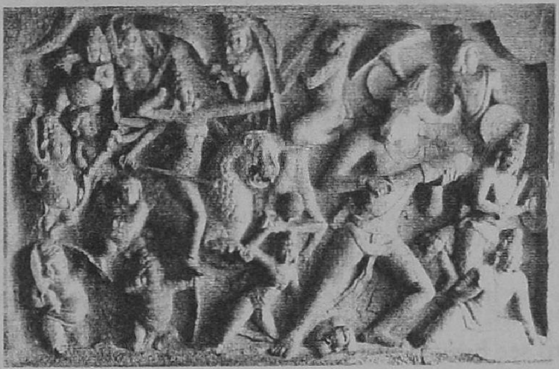
avatar is evidence of the fecundity of style in the medieval era in India. The Gomatha (Mother Cow) is venerated for the divine powers attributed to every part of its body. The sacred cow according to the Hindu belief grants all desires, boons, wealth and knowledge. It has always been associated with maternal benevolence.



The Vedic wedding rite reads thus "the groom and bride shall take the vow to lead their marital life in harmony like a pair of bulls harnessed together to a yoke".

In Tamil Nadu, on the second day of the Harvest festival, Pongal, which falls in mid-January, it is the celebration of the bull and cow. They are decorated with coloured horns and bells and let loose. The ceremonial presence of the cow and calf in Vaishnavite temples and in traditional homes elevates their status.

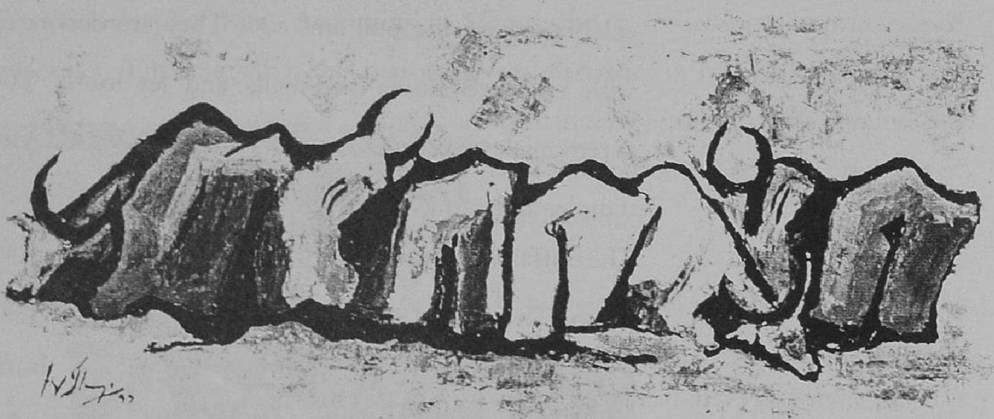
The buffalo, on the contrary, is related to death; it is the vahana of Yama, the harbinger of death. The legend of Mahishasuramardhini enforces the Shakti cult. Mahisha is the buffalo headed demon slain by Durga in her ten-armed avatar mounted on a lion. The act of pinning down Mahisha is a dynamic composition as seen in the bas relief of the Pallava period (7th 9th century AD) at Mahabalipuram.



Philosophy

Dualism or Dvaitam is the primordial and eternal principle of the universe: purush-prakriti, Siva- Shakti, male-female, matter-energy, positive- negative, and mind-heart ... This dichotomy of Nature is the very essence of human life. There is a constant play of dualistic powers which are woven into the Hindu mythology as rasa leelas, avatars, ... The self with consciousness as Shakti and purush is constantly re-establishing itself and

continues to exist as a divine principle. In this process, ego manifests. The energy or shakti, which was the very reason for the dualism evolves and attains enlightenment and, at the end dissolves in the time-space continuum, that is Brahmam. The constant struggle of the dualistic principle of existence is symbolised in one of the manifestations of male ego. The bovine attributes of virility or sexual energy fundamentally justifies the existence of the self in order to create and procreate.



Bovine Inspirations

From childhood, the artist was fascinated by the inseparable presence of bulls, cows and buffalos in the lives of people, in the villages as well as in the cities. Today, it is not surprising to see heavily laden bullock carts that ply the congested city roads. On festive occasions, peasants and labourers take joy rides on these carts. Cattle idly wander amidst the hassle and bustle of the city roads, yet they are tolerated for their sacred status.

But the painful reality of seeing emaciated cattle huddled in a truck or walking on the way to a slaughter house for hundreds of miles is a heart-rending scene. In India, cows and bulls, once they cease to fulfill their functions are doomed for slaughter!

A.V.Ilango was inspired by the bovine form, one of the principal idioms of Indian tribal, folk and classical art. In his composition of form and space, the rhythm of linear divisions is bold in some cases and sublime in others. The dualistic principle that merges and separates the purush- prakriti, Siva-Shakti, matter-energy, positive-negative is the basis for the harmony and rhythm, The composition is constructed by the flowing lines of the bovine form that transcend from the positive space to the negative space thus creating a visual energy shift. The kinetic force of the graphism may culminate in tranquility.

The power and grace of linear compositions are the salient features of Indian art from Antiquity. Intersecting lines that demarcate form and space accentuate the harmony and rhythm. The swastik is the epicentre of action in a traditional composition and it generates the spiral movement and tremendous visual energy.

Bull and Beyond

In his later series, the woman dominates the bull, reflecting the power play of ego, seduction and domination as in purush-prakriti, Siva-Shakti... Birds are also incorporated in the composition. For example, the parrot, as in classical Indian literature and art enhances the romantic sensibility, whereas the crow has a very symbolic role. The common scavenger is an emissary of the ancestors. The idiomatic relationship between the bull, woman and crow refers to human life and bonds.

In the modern era, man is oriented towards automobiles and machines as a manifestation of the male ego. They are second to home and status symbol besides his main mode of transport. The place of a bull or horse is not so important anymore except for those who still practice certain rituals ...

TitBits

In 1929, when Rabindranath Tagore was nearly seventy he started to paint He did nearly 2000 paintings. - Lakshmi Priya Daniel

Traditional Indian Art Forms - Creating Value

Ms. Geetha Srinivasan *

6

Introduction

India – a large country, which unfolds a wide tapestry of socio-economic-cultural spectra. In its myriad colours they present to us a civilisation which has gone through a very long evolutionary process.

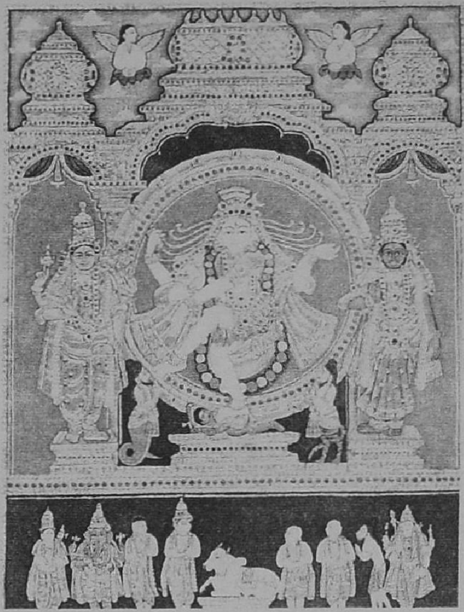
Indian history is culturally rich. From the Vedic age to the current day modern India, her culture has gone through a major metamorphosis. While benchmarked against a universal moral order, one may observe that the transformation has been both positive and negative.

What is of immense concern today is the negative transition. This disturbing shift has not happened overnight but has undergone a gradual transition over a period of time. Even though Indian history has witnessed a significant dilution of the cultural strength over a period of time, there has been some efforts put in by a certain section of the society to arrest this degradation. The unfortunate truth is, such efforts cannot yield result in overcoming a social issue as large as this. Therefore it calls for a concerted endeavour from a larger cross section of the society in order to arrest these changing trends in our culture.

There are several reasons for this change. Invasion of the cultural influences of the developing countries had been a major contributor to this cultural transition. Acceptance of western cultural practices based on the economic condition prevalent in those countries has had wide ramifications on our culture. As the rate of diminishing inheritance of our past culture is on the increase, the threshold level of

* *Trustee, RAASI Art foundation, Chennai.*

existence of a "value-based society" is being put into jeopardy, thereby calling for immediate action. The day is not far enough before the future children of this great country is unable to experience some of the finer aspects of our ancient culture in their day to day life. They may have to learn them more out of written texts and manuscripts. Probably they have already started doing so! Therefore there is an urgent need for us to quickly take some drastic actions to stem this rot and ensure that the rich cultural heritage of India is preserved and carried forward for the betterment of the society at large.



Art and culture are intrinsically woven together in any society. One of the fundamental pillars of culture is art. As Indian culture has a long history, so does Indian art. Indian Art is an exhaustive subject. So are ancient Indian Arts. One would invariably find the richness of the ancient culture in these classical art forms. Exquisite paintings telling stories of human values. Aesthetic portrayals of virtues of men and women. Paintings of yore presenting tales of human saga. Classical renderings reflecting moral attitudes. Each one of them speaking volumes of our rich cultural past.

About the Tanjore School of Art

The shimmering waters of River Cauvery with a vast expanse of greenery on either side cast a spell on any ongoing traveler in Tanjore. Urchins in nearby hamlets enjoying themselves in the river, the deep sway of the overgrown coconut trees in the gentle breeze, which sweeps the river banks, the bright looking ladies carrying a pot of river water, is all a very familiar sight in a place where the River occupies the centre stage of civilisation. Thanjavur as it was called in the olden days, had been a city of great cultural importance and has witnessed the genesis and development of several forms of arts and crafts. Besides being a place for excellence in arts and crafts, Thanjavur also has been a place of commercial and political importance, historically.

It was during the Chola period Thanjavur rose in its status as a significant contributor to the socio-economic and cultural development of the country. The mastery over craft and the excellence in engineering knowledge acquired by the Tanjore craft persons are amply

demonstrated by those imposing and towering temple structures. The majestic temple gopurams is not only an engineering marvel but also reflects the dexterity of the sculpt work. The intricate work on stone still remains an enigma. These gopurams have withstood the ravages of time and stands testimony to mastery of Tanjore craft and architecture prevalent in those days. The Bragadeswarar temple and the Raja Rajeswari temple are standing examples of this. Craft and art associated with architecture or other faculties of expression were essentially based on the culture prevailing then. Manifestations in the form of temples and art relating to God based themes were a result of the 'bhakthi' culture

(which was best represented by the Hindus with their devotion to God) prevalent in those days.

The visual art pertaining to the traditional Tanjore School, now more popularly known as Tanjore Art had its genesis in the early 18th century or probably even before. Influence of art forms of Karnataka and Andhra are fairly evident in this style of art. The art is a unique mixture of the staunch belief in god and goddesses, which reflected the bhakti culture and the ability to create and build attractive works of art in the visual media. While the growth and development of the Tanjore art can be

traced over a fairly long period between 1700 to 1900, the major thrust and impetus to the

art was given during the period when the city was ruled by the Marathas. The art became popular during the Maratha period and received extensive royal patronage, especially during the time when Sarabhoji II reigned (1797-1833). Like any other arts and crafts in India during the ancient days, the patrons received the accolade for promoting art and craft forms while the actual artists and craft persons remained anonymous.

Tanjore art is a natural extension of the skill and dexterity of the Tanjore craftsmen. The art is more skill oriented and it demands a lot of attention on fineness and perfection. It does not call for major ability for innovation and creativity. Tanjore Art is basically iconic. Figures of Hindu gods and goddesses are the normal themes. Siva, Parvati, Rama, Krishna, Lakshmi, Saraswathi and other gods and goddesses in different forms are depicted in this art form. If the depiction represents an event in the Hindu mythology, the main figure is supported with smaller figures as demanded by the theme. Rama Pattabishekam or Coronation of Lord Rama is a typical rendering in the Tanjore style where several figures are painted to bring out the reality of the thematic situation. The style and modality have undergone some minor variations due to contemporary demands. The traditional art was done on a single wooden board covered with a layer of cloth pasted on it. The cloth is coated with a compound of an adhesive and a smoothening agent. Today this compound is normally a mixture of 'Fevicol' and French chalk powder or Plaster of Paris mixed with appropriate quantity of water. In earlier times lime white was used. After the application of the compound, the surface of the board along with the cloth is polished with a smooth stone or a glass stone to make the surface of the board smooth and even. This would facilitate the artist to work

freely on the board and also ease the movement of the painting brush. Now the canvas is ready for taking the sketch.

A sketch is made with the finer details of the icons and the surroundings including the areas where the gems are to be placed and the relief work is to be made. In the case of a professional artist who creates several art works, in view of the repetitive nature of the painting, the artist maintains a master. The master is transferred to the board through a carbon. Care should be taken at this stage to provide a margin recess on all the four sides of the board to accommodate the frame, once the painting is completed. Once the detailed sketching has been completed, the gems are placed. In the earlier days, especially the paintings that were patronised by the royalty, these gems were precious stones. Currently semi-precious stones are used. The adhesive medium in the conventional art is a paste made of tamarind seed. With the development of newer form of art materials, the adhesive media, which is more popular, is Fevicol.

The gems are stuck at the appropriate places and a compound is applied to form the relief work. In the earlier days, the compound was made of unboiled lime powder mixed with glue. Fevicol or other forms of glue mixed with French chalk powder or Plaster of Paris is more widely used currently to form the relief work. Execution of the relief work is a critical component of the painting. For the painting to be attractive, the relief work should be extremely fine and intricate. The application of the compound is done through different methods- either with a help of brush or through piece of small cotton bag filled with the compound and made to eject through a hole pierced in it or with the help of a cone as done in the application of mehndi. Use of brush yields better results for doing the relief work. The relief work enables to give the picture a three dimensional effect. The gems are also embedded in the compound so that they get firmly placed on the board. The possibility of the gems falling out is extremely remote.

The relief work is covered by sticking gold leaves or foils on them. The gold foils are thin so as to bring out the profile of the relief work after they are stuck. Pasting the gold foils over the relief work is again a delicate work - they need to be cut to size so as to ensure that they cover only the area where the relief work is done. Also care should be taken to apply the right amount of pressure with a piece of cloth or sponge on the foil while pasting. Any excessive pressure can tear or spoil the foil and on the contrary the foil would not be pasted properly if they are very gently pressed.

The painting is normally done using white colour for the key figure and slightly shading it with blue or the normal body colour. The depiction is normally static and the painting does not reflect any action or movement. The usage of the background colours is mostly striking - it is a dark hue of red, blue or green. The paintings are characterised by pillars and curtains in the side, and some smaller compartmentalisation at the bottom or top to accommodate small figures. The rendering of the faces and other parts of the body are mostly chubby, reminding us of Lord Milton's description of L'Allegro as "so buxom, blithe and debonair". This generally reflected the prosperity of the land during this period. Extensive use of gems, gold foils and other embellishment adds richness to the art. The pictures are normally framed and wall hung.

Like any other ancient art forms, Tanjore painting has also undergone some changes. Changes are inevitable. The transition stems out of two factors - one due to normal erosion of the original style of painting due to evolution of time and the other due to introduction of newer practices in the execution. The normal erosion of the original style happens as the art is passed from one generation to the other and results in transmission loss. In view of this, the style of execution undergoes a change. This is fairly evident in most of the ancient arts. The second factor, is the introduction of newer style of execution. This arises out of availability of new art material as well as innovative way of introducing new tools for execution. Technological developments of new painting media like poster, acrylic, and oil colours have significantly replaced usage of colours made in the classical style out of vegetable dyes.

In addition to the above two factors, there is also another reason for change in the art form, which stems from commercial considerations. In order to reduce the economic value addition made to the art, the quality of the art is made to suffer for commercial reasons. The traders in the art field, who are concerned more about the profitability, make an earnest attempt to reduce the cost (not the price) of the art. This means cheaper input materials are used for creating the art and at the same time persons who are not well trained in the execution of the art form are deployed for creating the art. Using artists who are not trained properly brings down the "execution cost" and thus the quality of the art ultimately suffers significantly.

Therefore it becomes imperative to arrest the changes in the original style of the ancient art forms due to undesirable reasons, if we need to carry forward the rich cultural heritage in its true traditional and authentic form. This becomes possible through appreciation and

patronising the original style of these ancient art forms. The onus lies with the broader section of the current day community to develop the ability to appreciate the true art forms and also to distinguish the difference between the good and the bad. We have a difficult task ahead. We need to preserve these types of ancient art forms in its original splendour allowing very little room for distortion and carry it forward. Thanjavur Painting is one amongst such precious art form.

Conclusion

As days roll by, paradigm shifts in culture continues. But then that is the natural characteristic of culture. It goes through a constant phase of change. Bur what is very important to the society is that the universal values which stands for certain moral order should not get affected amidst these shifts in cultural stances. In the modern world things can be very confusing as to what is right and what is wrong. However there can be no argument on upholding the universal values. Values like non-injury, speaking the truth, compassion, sharing, humility, absence of deception and jealousy, and so on. These are human values, which need to be upheld at all times. In Sanskrit we call this as "Sanatana Dharma". The word "Sanantana" represents "timelessness" and the closest English equivalent for "Dharma" is "Ethical Values". These are values, which every human being in this earth should nurture and cherish. Traditional art reflect these values. Values of higher order which makes us good human beings.

ரபேல்

ரபேல் என்ற ஓவியர் இத்தாலியிலுள்ள ரோம் நகரில் 1520-ஆம் ஆண்டு ஏப்ரல் திங்கள் 6-ஆம் நாளில் பிறந்தார். இவர் ஒரு ஓவியராக இத்தாலியின் சிறந்த மறுமலர்ச்சிக்குக் காரணமான வராவார். இவர் ரோமிலுள்ள பெரிய வாடிகன் ஓவியங்கள் மற்றும் தாய் ஓவியங்கள் உருவாக்குவதில் சிறந்தவர். இவரது ஓவியங்கள் பல்வேறு அருங் காட்சியகங்களில் பாதுகாத்துக் காட்சியில் வைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன.

தாய் ஓவியம்

TitBits

Ayilyam Tiunaal patronized Raja Ravi Varma (1848 - 1906) who is regarded as the first "modern" Indian painter. Ravi Varma was largely self taught and obtained his first set of oil paints only in 1867 - 68. He held his first exhibition at Madras in 1873 at the age of 25. - Lakshmi Priya Daniel

The Culture of Printmaking in Chennai

Ms. Mallika *

India is a land of multiculturalism. Diverse people have migrated from as far as Greece and Asia Minor in the West and the borders of China in the East and were slowly absorbed into the Indian stream along with their cultural baggage. The heterogeneous strands of culture comprising those of the invaders and the indigenous people melted into what was unmistakably Indian.

In the modern context of printmaking the seeds of artistic change were laid under colonial rule. India saw a boom in printing activity in the nineteenth century. Apart from commercial printing activities some artists used the print medium for creative expression. The term printmaking refers to activities involving the execution of creative prints. Woodcuts made by Bat-tala artists of West Bengal based on puranic myths, historical scenes and iconic images were of great historical and aesthetic significance. Ravi Varma's oleographs, the prints of Nandalal Bose and the satirical prints of Gaganendranath Tagore inspired printmaking activity in various parts of the country. The great veteran from the South, Krishna Reddy, explored the creative properties of the print medium and exposed Indians to the viscosity technique.

R.B.Bhaskaran, Echo of Freedom, lino cut, 1973

The pioneering efforts of A. P. Panneerselvam and R.B. Bhaskaran account for the spurt in printmaking activity in Chennai. Bhaskaran's stature as an innovative printmaker is undisputed. The power of his imagery and his thorough understanding of the potential of the print medium speak volumes for his

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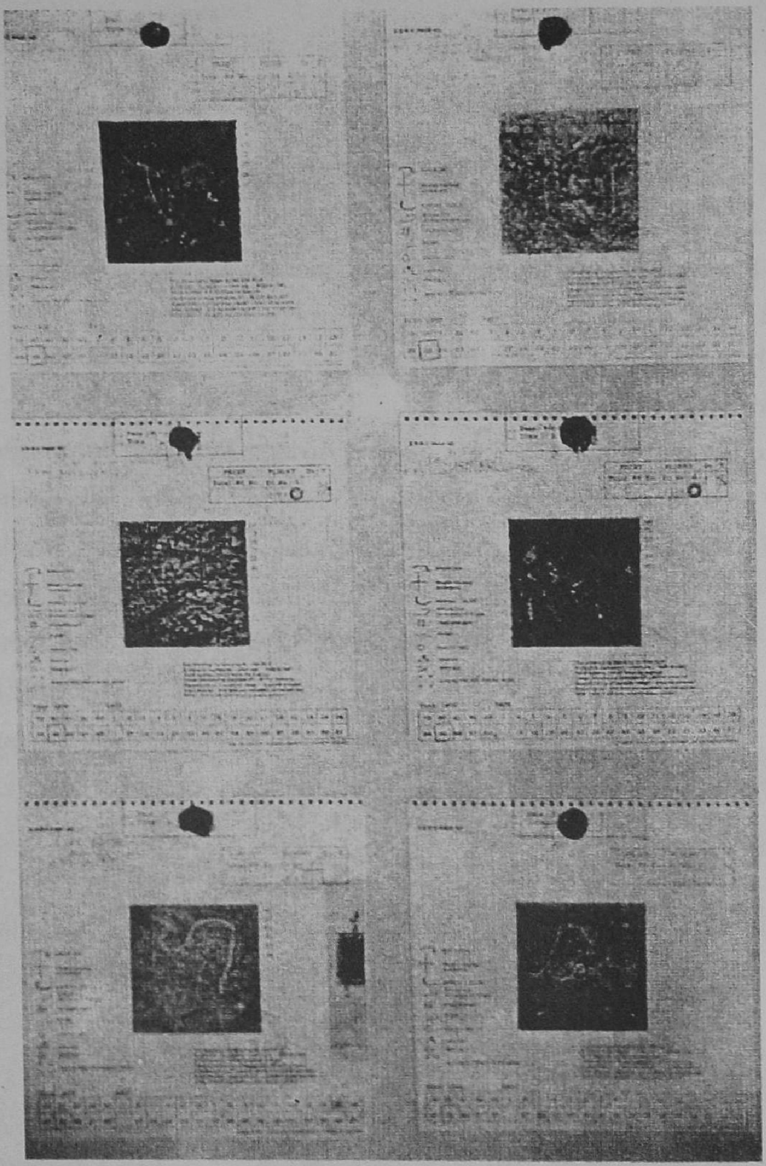
contribution. As a teacher, he motivated a good number of students into pursuing the print medium. Bhaskaran's prints are a virtual inventory rich in semiotics. In a series of prints based on the life cycle and evolution he sought to understand the mysteries of creation by delving into the ideas of birth, death and rebirth. Marginalizing colour, he worked towards mastering the technical nuances of linocut. These prints combine diverse imagery of birds, human foetus, growing plant, all symbolizing fertility and life incorporated into the female form, which becomes the "archetype" - the mother goddess. The owl, another of Bhaskaran's favourite motifs appears here. In these early prints, Indian symbols and the linear mode of the Madras School synchronize with modem European tendencies of flattening out space and simplifying form to express a philosophy totally Indian in spirit.



Rm Palaniappan, Page X2 Series, (detail)

Belonging to a later generation of printmakers, Rm. Palaniappan's journeys into space through his prints have won him international acclaim. Numbers, rubber stamps, dates, arrows, dots, shellac seals these are usually associated with scientific documents, space drawings or maps. By any stretch of imagination, can these become the most interesting

aspects of a work of art? One has to just take a cursory glance at Palaniappan's prints to realize that the answer is in the affirmative. His experiences of the imaginary journeys into space have been transferred into works of art. For instance, he would imagine the supports of a spiral stairway being dislodged while he climbed up - only then did he feel he would experience the material reality of space. Some of his prints look like a satellite picture with a weather forecast; the others look like aerial views of topographical surveys or military targets. Why does Palaniappan enhance a print with a rubber stamp or a military badge or a seal? "My satisfaction starts when I can break the principles of printmaking which are too well defined". (Rm. Palaniappan, Bio-data 1993) Palaniappan does not believe that editions should be exact replicas. The difference in the psychological state of mind at different time frames is bound to have a bearing on the character of the print. "The physical act of rolling ink on the plate... or the amount of pressure exerted on the plate cannot be identical each time. This aspect of the time factor affecting the character of the edition is the fourth dimension of printmaking, which gives every edition an individual character". Thus this view negates all the possibilities of an edition as a simulacrum standing in the way of the authentic. Palaniappan uses some extraneous material or adds a personal touch by way of drawing or writing over the print. Numbers, which are another preoccupation of the artist and their lack of sensory connotations, have led Palaniappan to link them to a very Indian belief-Moksha; liberation which is attained when one can sever oneself from all bonds of the sensory world. It is now that Palaniappan's number related art enters a quasi metaphysical realm. Palaniappan has been criticized for having invested his prints with a western character. But by negotiating an oriental mystical concept, he creates a cultural synthesis.

The horizon of the printmaking scenario of Chennai is ever widening as can be seen in the digital forays of Bhavani Shanker and Ravi Shanker, which show that technology is part and parcel of the culture of the people. The works of R. Balasuramanian, A Balasubramanian and Asma Menon further reflect the versatility of the print medium. The minimalist tendencies in the prints of A. Balasubramanian imply the process of acculturation and globalization. His thumb impression has been copied and screen-printed thus showing a complete innovation. Balasuramaniam has dared to do away with the plate and substitute it with the thumb!

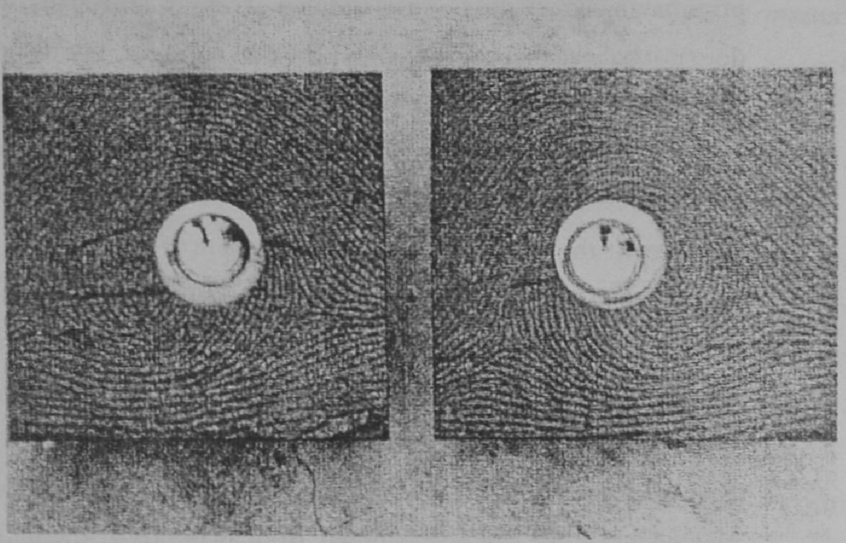
TitBits

The word "history" comes from a Greco Latin root, which means to narrate, and another meaning is a judge. So history not only tells a story, but it also passes judgement on it, puts it in order and gives it meaning. - Lakshmi Priya Daniel

Printmaking is in its infancy in India - RB. Bhaskaran.

Printmaking can never stop growing. As long as technology grows, Printmaking will grow too. - Rm.Palaniappan.

Printmaking has already reached its peak. It is on the decline.
- P.D. Dhumal.



These varied statements on the state of printmaking in India only go to say how very difficult it is to make an overall assessment of the current situation of the printmaking scene, whether in India or more specifically in Tamilnadu. Each of the above observations has an element of truth; however contradictory one may be to the other. It surely is not wrong to say that printmaking is in its infancy. It is yet to make an impact on the public - the kind of impact that painting or sculpture have made. There has been a remarkable change in the status of the artist in society when compared to the 1950s and 60s accompanied by the mushrooming of art galleries. Chennai today is very vibrant with art exhibitions happening with increasing frequency. But the larger question is whether people can appreciate a print. Printmakers of Chennai over that the lay public often fails to differentiate between a well worked out print from the one that has no artistic merit.

Prints are yet to make their way even into the corporate world. R B. Bhaskaran and A.P. Paneerselvam feel that whereas printmaking helped democratize art in the West, it did not work the same way in the Indian set up. "What would a middle class Indian want to buy or the drawing 100 ml-new home'? 'Naarkali' (Chair).........A print to adorn his wall will be the last thing on his mind" says Bhaskaran. As for those belonging to the upper strata

of society, a print is not yet as good as a painting or sculpture.Here one must acknowledge the adventurous spirit of the pioneers like Paneerselvam, Bhaskaran and Thota Tharani who dared to experiment with a new medium when recognition was hard to come by even for a painter or a sculptor. The changing face of society demands that one readjusts his position within the new framework. This applies to art and expression too. Over the years, artists have been grappling with the problem of portraying the "real" image. Today, how relevant is this idea of the "real" image. But then, almost unconsciously the parameters that govern printmaking have now become more open and flexible. It is here that the printmakers of Chennai have made a valuable contribution to printmaking. Creative and imaginative artists will surely harness the technological advancement to their advantage and yet breathe new life into printmaking by breaking conventions that stifle creativity. It would be worthwhile to ponder over Edward Wortz' words on art - "It is like an old Zen song, everything is still the same as it was, but it is different".

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8

The Art of Adichanallur

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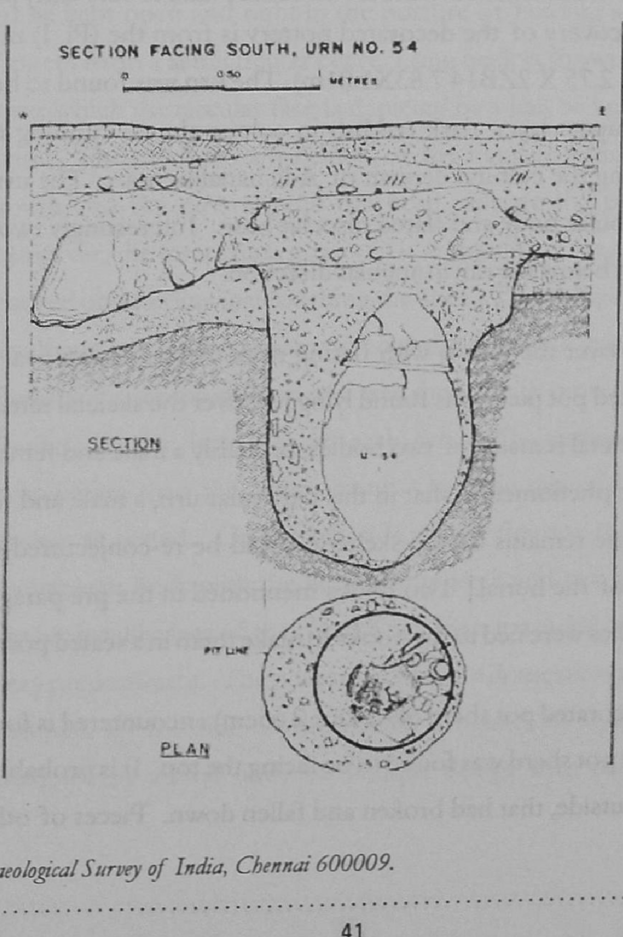
Location

Adichanallur (8°37'47.6" N; 77°52'34.9"E) is situated on the right bank of the Tambraparani river, about four kilometers, west of Srivaikundam, the taluk head quarters in the Thoothukudy district of Tamil Nadu. It is located at about 680 Kms, south of Chennai and on the Tiruneveli and Tiruchendur railway line.

Previous Works

The extensive urn burial site at Adichanallur in Thoothukudy district (formerly of Tirunelveli district) was first noticed by Dr. Jagor of Berlin Museum in 1876. Dr. Jagor excavated a few of the urns and the skeletal remains were taken to Germany and stored in the Berlin Museum. Most of the findings remain unpublished. Subsequently, in the early years of 20th Century (1902-1904), Alexander Rea excavated a good number of urns resulting in the discovery of artifacts numbering over three thousand. His collection included gold diadems; bronze objects notably lids with exquisite finials depicting many animal forms, iron objects and thousands of potsherds. The objects recovered from the excavation were provisionally listed by him.



The work of Alexander Rea is significant as in that he was able to recover a large collection of artifacts. Because of the lack of proper documentation in the Archaeological context of the artifacts, no clear-cut inferences could be made on the socio-economic and cultural aspects of

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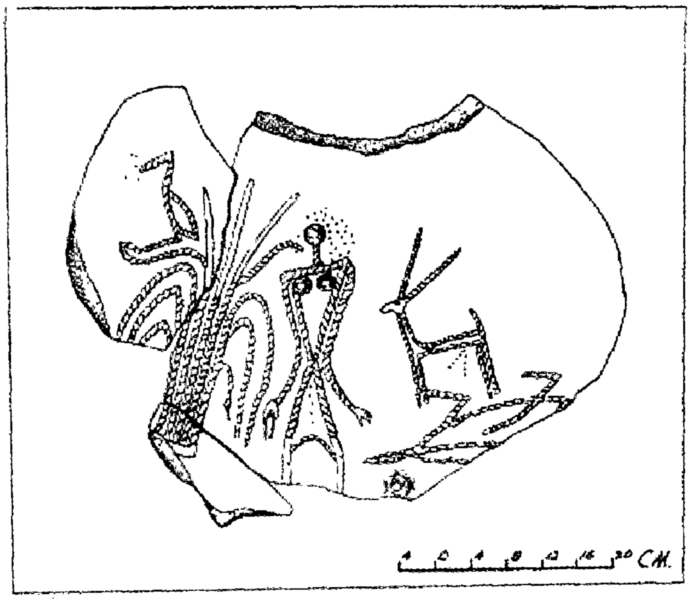
the society. The excavation conducted by Chennai Circle of Archaeological Survey of India under the guidance of the Author during 2003-4 brought to light stratified urns of sub-phases. The excavation during the current season 2004-5 revealed the habitation site of the authors of the urn burial.

While Alexander Rea has assigned very early date and had recorded that the site may be one of the earliest sites of South India, no serious attempt was made for about 100 years to date the site with all available modern scientific dating methodology. In the above circumstances, Archaeological Survey of India, Chennai Circle, during the year 2003-4 encountered about 168 urns and their assemblages within an area of 60m X 60m. During the season 2004-5 also the remains of the habitation site with potter's kiln was found. The site had yielded various artifacts made of copper, iron and a few convex beads. There were two types of urns in the site, one is coarse red ware and another is black and red pottery of Megalithic fibre type. The latter one is so far an unknown feature in India and they are not found recorded in the Megalithic contexts too. The coarse red pottery seems seldom decorated but in some instances, mere oblique thumb imposes appear as a distinct mark. The earlier excavations have represented no such decorated urns in their excavation. Nevertheless the recent excavation (2003-4) had yielded a unique decorated pottery, which takes back the art of Tamil Nadu to very early period.
The discovery of the decorated pottery is from the (Pl. I) urn No.54, trench No.2ZB15 (2ZB15 2.75 X 2ZB14 7.83X1.01m). The urn was found to be sealed by layer No.3 which is a compact layer, dark reddish in colour almost running through out the site, rather indicating the cultural deposit of Adichanallur man. The urn is with out-turned beaded rim globular body and flared discular base. Interestingly two hooks are found inside the urn, just below the rim in angular direction.

The lid over the Urn is with flaring neck. After the removal of the lid, inside the urn, a decorated pot piece was found lying just over the skeletal remains. It is equally interesting that skeletal remains of two bodies, probably a male and female were interred this urn. It is a rare phenomenon that in this particular urn, a male and female bodies were kept and the entire remains of the skeleton could be re-conjectured thus indicating the primary nature of the burial. Two hooks mentioned in the pre paragraph indicate that probably the bodies were tied to the hooks to make them in a seated posture.

The decorated pot sherd (49 x 28 x 2.65cm) encountered is found to be little curved inside and the pot sherd was found to be facing the top. It is probably the part of a lid, decorated from outside, that had broken and fallen down. Pieces of other parts of the lid could be

collected from inside the urn. This urn, as reported above was, having one lid, this may be a part of another inner lid, and there are many instances in the site where double lids were used over the single urn (ex Urn 87 and Urn-168).

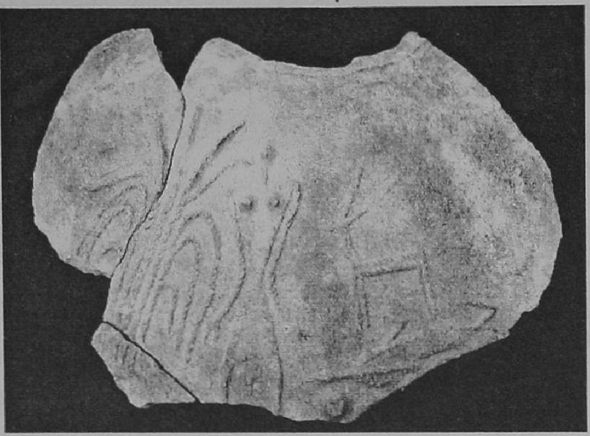


Decorated Sherd

Description (Pl. II)

The oblique design over the outer part of the above lid which is curved inside is very predominant and attracts the art lover. At the centre is a female figurine formed by two geometrical designs of two triangles one placed above the other shaping the body and trunk. The stretched hands are found, bent at the hip portion and the fingers of left are found to be kept open and right in the posture of holding something, as the thumb and index fingers form a semicircular curve. Long neck is shown with the mere oblique vertical line over which the circular face is depicted by a ball of lump applied disparagingly above the trunk. The predominant breasts of the figurine indicate the age of the figurine as very youth and the dots around the head indicate the probability of the flaring hairstyle. However, the interesting aspect of the figurine is the short skirt like garment shown by a curved oblique line just touching the knee. The oblique designs are also shown decorating the lower part of the skirt at the centre with thumb impression. The right hand side of the figurine is a representation of a tree shown with central trunk formed by five vertical lines flanked by five branches on each side. The designs of the side branches are more dominating than the centre trunk. Over the top of the right side branch one crane is shown as seated. On the left side of the figurine is an antelope well formed with the rectangular body with the vertical thin neck and two horns placed at 60?. Four legs are shown just like legs of the cot, the rear leg is extended to the top forming a tail and eyes are very predominant. The posture is that of a domesticated animal standing by the side of its mistress. By the side of the animal is placed an aquatic creature, alligator, which was designed by a oval body of oblique design with centre line at the apex of the oval

projecting in and out forming its face and backbone. The oblique designs are also drawn at the top and below by two lines at an angle of 60° forming part of two pairs of legs of the animal.

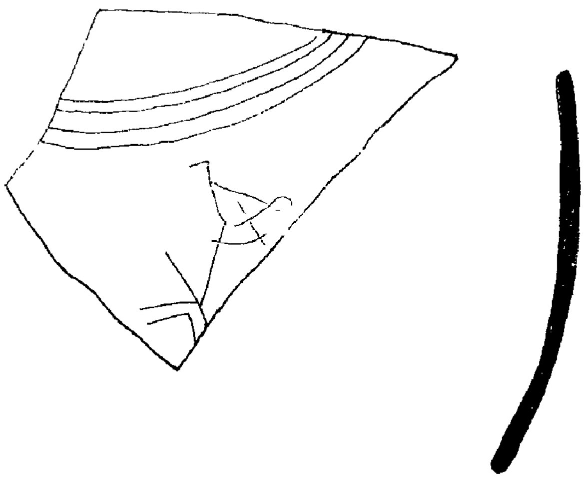


Discussion Pl. III

The decorated pottery is significant because of the OSL dating of the potteries in the same level happens to be 2700 years BP. Even though it is very difficult in assigning any particular cult or description to the above design, the well developed body of the figurine is strictly conforming to the skeletal remains of Adichanallur. A preliminary study of the skeletal by the Physical Anthropologist have brought to light that the ladies of the period had well developed belly and broad shoulder and also average height of the female is about 5.4'. The decorated design in the pottery just represents the portrait of the Adichanallur woman.

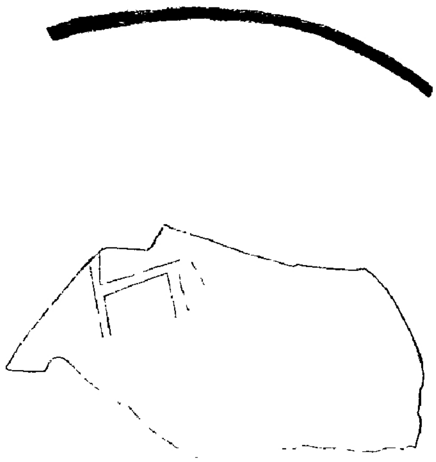
Depiction of human figures in geometrical form is not a new tradition in Indian art. Such depictions could be seen in rock art of Tamil country as noticed in Kilvalai, Mallapadi, Kidarippatti, etc. The survey of rock art of Tamil country and its comparison with present motif of Adichanallur had shown that there were many similarities between both. While geometrical designs of combined triangles to form human figures are almost similar to many such counterparts in rock art, the graphic depiction in relief is a new art tradition. The depiction of the face in human figurine is generally shown in rock paintings by bird's beak like projection indicating probably the sharp nose or oval face of the figures. Most of the rock paintings are more in action communicating some message between themselves and in turn to the visitors also. Antelope or the deer are the popular animals found in the rock art just like other animals horse, elephant, etc. Antelope and birds resembling crane are also noticed in graffiti marks in many pot sherds. (Pl. IV). Some of the garments depicted in rock art is also a analogous to that of Adichanallur art as noticed in the case of lower skirt in Kilvalai as comparable with that of the present motif Except

that, the angular fashion of the skirt is the improvement in the style of lower garment. While it is difficult to distinguish between the male and female in rock art, the motif of



Adichanallur is definitely a female figure, the centre of attraction. With the comparable materials, we can comfortably say that the depiction of the alligator may be a new addition in Adichanallur. A crane seated on the tree is also another added attraction to the depicted scene.

The incident depicted in Adichanallur motif may be on the banks of the river as indicated by the presence of the alligator, and the presence of antelope indicates probably the forest backdrop. However, presence of antelope in a subdued way near its mistress shows the probability of being domesticated. The crane over the tree also confirms the occurrence of the depiction on the banks of the river or slushy pond. The crane is holding something, a fish within its beaks as indicated by the row of dots around its beak. The portrayal of the tree with its branches bent towards the ground almost forming the additional support to the trunk is an added attraction. The tree depicted may be a banyan tree as the branches drop shoot to the ground and support to parent branches.



The sole attraction of the motif is the central female figurine, which can be taken as the earliest depiction of the female in motif almost like a relief sculpture. With broad shoulders, voluptuous breast, very thin hip and predominant pelvis, very lengthy hands. She pre runs the sculptural art of ancient Tamil country. The hands are artistically drawn

to show the feminine beauty of the period. It is very difficult at this juncture to reconjecture or attribute any historical or literary references of that period to the motif.

Nevertheless, the art of Adichanallur is a representation of matured art tradition that pre runs in many respects the classical art of the land. As it happens to be the earliest representation of the art in motif, the art historians can revise the datum for further research.

வின்சென்ட் வான் காக் ஹாலந்திலுள்ள குருட்-ஜுஎ்டஸ்டு என்ற இடத்தில் ஒரு கிறிஸ்தவ மதக் குருவின் மகனாகப் பிறந்தார். இவருக்கு வண்ணம் வெளிப்படுத்தத் தலையாய அடையாளமாகத் தெரிந்தது. கலாச்சாரமானதும் மதச்சார்பானதுமான சூழ்நிலையில் வளர்க்கப்பட்டாலும் வின்சென்ட் உணர்ச்சிவசப்படக்கூடியவரும் தன்னம்பிக்கையற்றவருமாகவே காணப்பட்டார். 1860-லிருந்து 1880 வரையுள்ள காலத்தில் ஒரு நிறுவனத்தில் விற்பனைக் கணக்கராகவும் போரினேஜ் என்ற இடத்தில் போதகராகவும் இருந்தார். இவர் அதிக உணர்ச்சிவசப்பட்டதால் பெல்ஜியத்தில் போதகப் பதவியிலிருந்தும் துரத்தப்பட்டார். எனவே, பெல்ஜியத்திலிருந்தே ஓவியம் கற்று அதன் வழி அழகை உருவாக்கி மகிழ்ச்சியை வழங்கத் தீர்மானித்தார். டச்சு நாட்டில் இருந்த காலத்தில் தீட்டிய இவரது ஓவியங்கள் இருண்ட வண்ணங்களுடையதாகவும் கூர்மையான முறையில் ஒளியுட்டப்பட்டவையாகவும் பொதுவான காட்சிகளையுடையனவாகவும் இருந்தன. அவற்றில் மிக முக்கியமானது உருளைக் கிழங்கு தின்போர் (1885) என்பதாகும். இவர் 1890-ல் உயிர் நீத்தார்,

ஓவியத்தை எல்லாவற்றிற்கும் ஆணி வேராக வின்சென்ட் வான்காக் கருதினார். தனது சகோதரனாகிய தீயோவிடம் நான் ஓவியம் தீட்டுவதை நிறுத்த முடியவில்லை, ஏனென்றால் "உண்மையிலேயே எனக்கு வரைவாளரின் கரம் உண்டு. நான் ஓவியம் தீட்ட ஆரம்பித்ததிலிருந்து நான் சந்தேகப்படவோ சங்கோஜப்படவோ அல்லது நிலையற்றவனாகவோ இருக்கவில்லையல்லவா. நான் முன்னேறிச் சென்று போராட்டத்தில் நாளுக்கு நாள் வலுவடைந்தது உனக்கு நன்றாய் தெரியும் ".

வான் காக்கின் ஓவிய வாழ்க்கை பத்து ஆண்டுகளே இருந்தாலும் விவசாயி முதல் தபால் காரன் வரையிலும் புல்வெளியிலிருந்து வீட்டு உட்புறம் வரையிலும் 1,100 படங்களைத் தீட்டினார்.ஓவியங்களை தனது வீட்டுக்கும் நண்பர்களுக்கும் எழுதிய கடிதம் போலத் தன் நினைவுகளைப் பதிக்கப் பயன்படுத்தினார்.

9

A Few Thoughts on Art Investment

Ms. Meena Dadha *

This article purports to be my impressions on the art investment culture at present prevailing in India. The impressions follow my experiences as a collector as well as my experience in running a gallery. What I present is a quick list to consider while buying art, or even while planning investment for the future.

There has been a very positive turnaround in the art scene in India in the course of the last decade or so. Paintings have been reported to notch up to huge prices. International auction houses like Christie's and Sotheby's have been showing an increasing interest in Indian Artists and the auctions conducted under their helm have been successful. Media coverage of art and artists has grown. The compound effect of all these has been to create a new awareness about art as an investment possibility. Now people are certainly willing to spend on art more than they had done twenty years back. While this is certainly a healthy trend, there are also areas, which need to be addressed, if art investment pattern has to evolve better than what it is today.

Talk to any person with money to invest in art, the person would opt for the usual standards: gold, silver, shares or bonds. Beyond this there is art and people should be influenced into thinking of it as another viable option to put in their hard earned money, or at least a portion of it.

The overwhelming attitude that dictates a buyer's psyche while buying art is often extraneous to art per se. The overt considerations are mostly guided by a group mentality, which makes each one follow, in zeal, only the established brand names of the market. The high value on a painting has become the determining qualifier in buying: it has become axiomatic that unless a painting carries the well known signature or its price is astronomical a painting is not worth investing in. This stance has pushed the Indian art market into a linear pattern .This happens to be the main trend in spite of all the talks about the buoyancy of Indian art market.

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The investment graph circles around the same old indicators: a recent success story in an auction, the media favoured icons, the projected artist by an individual gallery.

While it is necessary to approach the market professionally, it is also mandatory that the space to work out that professional approach is big enough and does not involve a limited space. When I talk of a broader platform what I mean is to break the standardized mind set that often cripples the broader vision of the players involved in the art market: the art dealers, the gallery owners and the collectors. A balanced adventurism is called for to extend the art investment culture. Sadly when media reports the encouraging profile of art investment in India, it often overlooks the broader stories and pegs the views on the responses of a few collectors and the few chosen painters.

Before eyebrows are raised let me say, emphatically, that I am not voicing out against any gallery. Neither am I declaiming the rule and lure of profit. Galleries do have to run on profit. A gallery is not out there to be plagued by losses. There are inbuilt expenses in running the show.

Having said that, it is also equally true that few have played any instrumental role to propagate a broader attitude towards investment, or in the promotion of newer talents. Most players of the art market have stuck with the safer roads. Alongside, focus on fast results has not augured well: many outlets for art, which mushroomed in the eighties fell at all too soon due to this attitude to reap benefits from a market that suddenly seemed lucrative: but when the bubble burst (it was waiting to happen since the inflated image of the market itself was a misnomer) folding up the business, lock, stock and barrel, it became evident. The sudden enthusiasm, that energized many to open a gallery, was lost in the quagmire of falling profits. What was needed then, as it still needs now, is to approach the market pragmatically along with a broader approach, punctuated by a newer vision. A serious re-thinking is needed when the view that art could also be an alternative investment other than stocks, shares and bonds-even gold-is gaining currency.

Art, once bought, can never go cheaper. Either it will remain near about its initial price or rise higher. The return on art investment can often grow up to 20 percent per annum. Sincere works of art, unstained by hackneyed ideas always have the potential to appreciate more in the future.

There was and always will be two kinds of buyers: one who will buy as an investment, and the other who will be guided by instinct and love of art. Very often the second category of buyers will not be influenced by market considerations. Ironically there are not many in this category. In my experience, I have seen many prospective buyers (those looking for affordable art) intimidated by the art market stories and the prices. They tend to shy away from buying, thinking it is beyond their reach. The more the market turns pricier the more the chances are of depleting this segment, along with the secondary market of reselling art works, at prices higher than what had been invested initially. Both segments are of vital importance to the market. A painting of an emerging talent, bought at an affordable price could very well rise in the future, which in turn might help the collector to resell it and buy one of the brand names. Nurturing this segment is becoming mandatory. For the market is finite: it cannot be expected that one single collector will go on buying art works. Moreover, even if they are willing, there is often the paucity of wall space to hang their increasing collection. Furthermore, after downing their money for a few select painters, some collectors put a brake on their buying spree and go into the reselling mode.

The market runs the risk of being stagnated if a new crop of collectors does not arise and new and established galleries do not take upon the task of promoting fresh talent. Some galleries have also taken an interest in detailing benefits that can accrue from art investment to their prospective buyers. Galleries' role is expanding and it is not restricted anymore to just exhibiting and selling art works. Galleries act as a liaison between collectors and clients: they make all professional services available: restoration, profile of the artist and the nature of promotional events that could be undertaken to propagate the new talents. All these activities are geared towards one end: making the art market more investor friendly.

The key factor towards investing in the end depends on a few vital parameters. A proper keen eye towards art is of paramount importance. One who collects should have his or her considerations based on individual preferences rather than be guided by the select opinion of a chosen few. It is also equally important that the individual collector remains hawk-eyed towards the market milieu and is not just prompted by the usual stories of the market savvy. For this he needs to study the art market, visit galleries and browse the net and read books on art an essential ingredient to art appreciation.

Raja Ravi Varma's Collections in the Government Museum, Chennai

10

*Ms. A. Prema Dheebarani * & Dr. V. Jeyaraj***

Introduction

Government Museum, Chennai was established in 1851 just with 1100 geological specimens. To day it is a multi-purpose museum with both art and science sections. In the beginning the art section was under the control of the Curator for Archaeology. Later in 1982, a separate section for Contemporary Art was established. This section deals with the contemporary art including the collections of Raja Ravi Varma. The paintings of Raja Ravi Varma were displayed in the National Art Gallery. Now they are displayed in the First Floor of the Contemporary Art Gallery. This article discusses with the Ravi Varma's Collection of paintings.

History of the Collection of Ravi Varma's Paintings

The collection of Raja Ravi Varma's paintings were not made at a single time, but they were collected at various periods. It is learnt that in 1901, there was an exhibition conducted by the Government Museum with the collection of the Madras Fine Art Society by Dr. F. H. Gravely, who was also the President of the Society. The painting, Lady with Mirror had been purchased in 1957 from Raja Pratapagir Narasingirji, Sultan Bazaar, Hyderabad.

History of Raja Ravi Varma

Raja Ravi Varma was born on April 29, 1848 at Kilimanoor, a small town in Kerala. As a boy of five, he filled the walls of his house with pictures of animals and illustrations from everyday life. His uncle, the artist, Raja Raja Varma recognized his talents and gave him elementary art lessons. He was taken to Thiruvananthapuram in his fourteenth year to stay in the royal palace and learn oil painting. During these formative years the young Ravi Varma had many opportunities to discover and learn new techniques and media in the field of painting. His later years spent in Mysore, Baroda and other parts of the country enabled him to sharpen and expand his skills and blossom into a mature and complete painter. It is an oil painting painted by Raja Rama Varma, son of Raja Ravi Varma in the year 1952. Size: 113 X 85 cm.

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Raja Ravi Varma owed his success to a systematic training, first in the traditional art of Thanjavur, and then in European art. His paintings can be broadly classified into 1.Portraits, 2.Portrait-based compositions, 3.Theatrical compositions based on myths and legends. Though the artist's immense popularity lay in the third category, the first two types of works prove his merit as an exceedingly sensitive and competent artist. No other painter till today has been able to supersede Ravi Varma in portraiture in the oil medium. Ravi Varma is considered as modern among traditionalists and a rationalist among moderns. He provided a vital link between the traditional Indian art and the contemporary, between the Thanjavur School and Western Academic realism. He brought Indian painting to the attention of the larger world.

Raja Ravi Varma breathed his last on 2nd October 1906. The glittering career of Raja Ravi Varma is a striking case study of academic art in India. In the year following his death, the 'Modern Review' described him as the greatest artist of modern India, a national builder who showed the moral courage of a gifted 'high-born' in taking up the 'degrading profession of painting'. He was courted assiduously by the British Empire as well as by the Indian Maharajas. His less expensive prints of his Hindu deities hung in every home.

Raja Ravi Varma's Collection in Government Museum, Chennai

A dozen oil paintings on canvas by Raja Ravi Varma are preserved in the Government Museum, Chennai. Yashoda and Krishna, Sakuntala, Lady with a Mirror, Retired Sepoy, Water Carrier, The Miser, Mother Preparing Vegetables, A Native Noble Man are a few to mention. The Raja Ravi Varma's paintings, which are considered as National Treasures, have been placed in a gallery with Fibre Optic lighting. This system of lighting gives a dramatic lighting effect. It also removes Ultra-Violet and Infra- Red rays, which are harmful to the

paintings The Ravi Varma collection has been redisplayed under fibre optic lighting in the first floor of the Cotemporary Art Gallery.

Yashoda and Krishna is an oil painting painted in 1901 by Raja Ravi Varma, the harbinger of modern art in India. The artist had used dark background in the painting in order to give relief to the main pictures which are light yellow.

Sakuntala is an oil painting on canvas painted in 1901 by Raja Ravi Varma (1848-1906). The painting illustrates an episode from Kalidasa's Sanskrit play. The heroine Sakuntala is seated under the palmyrah tree. Her facial expression shows that she is lost in her thoughts. In the background Sage Dhurvasa is entering the hermitage.

Lady with Mirror is an oil painting on canvas painted by Raja Ravi Varma in the year 1894. The picture shows a lady holding a mirror in her hand and combing her flock of hair. The beauty of her hair style eloquently painted by the artist is noteworthy. This painting won Governor's gold medal.

Water Carrier is an oil painting painted in 1898 by C. Raja Raja Varma, the younger brother of Ravi Varma. The artist's study of life and landscape in his paintings is noteworthy. This scene was sketched by the artist on his way back from Chamundi hills and later painted.

The Miser is an oil painting on canvas by Raja Ravi Varma in the year 1901. It is the picture of the proverbial Jewish money lender. He is holding tightly the money bag with an expression to show that he is possessive.

A Retired Sepoy is an oil painting on canvas painted by Raja Ravi Varma in the year 1901

A Noble Man is an oil painting on canvas painted in 1893 by Raja Ravi Varma.

Good Environment for Oil Paintings

An environment, which is suitable for the better preservation of the paintings, is very much essential. The three main factors, which affect paintings, are light, heat and moisture besides biological agents and vandalism. Macroclimate is possible for a gallery if the gallery is fitted with air-conditioners, which can control both heat and moisture. The light should be harmless. Tube-light produces light rays such as UV and IR and they are harmful to the paintings. Therefore, the gallery lighting should be such that wither there should not be any emission of heat or it should be within the limit.

As far as the environment in the gallery in which the paintings of Raja Ravi Varma is concerned, fibre-optic lighting is provided which is free from heat, UV and IR lights. The gallery is air-conditioned. These will be preserving the paintings for posterity.

Conclusion

The Raja Ravi Varma's paintings are in a very good state. At present the glass of the showcases gives glare and is not suitable for taking photographs. It has been planned to remove the glass shutters. But the paintings will be suitably protected. It is also worth mentioning that the paintings are monitored by close circuit television besides the watch and ward of the museum.

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பேப்லோ ருயிஸ் பிக்காஸோ ஸ்பெயின் நாட்டில் உள்ள மலாகா என்ற இடத்தில் 1881 அக்டோபர் திங்கள் 25-ஆம் நாள் டோன் ஜோஸ் ருயிஸ் பிலாஸ்கோ என்ற ஓவிய ஆசிரியருக்கு மகனாகப் பிறந்தார். 1892-ல் பேப்லோ நுண்கலைக் கல்லூரியில் சேர்ந்து பயின்றார். அதிக அளவில் அவரது தகப்பனாரே அதிகமாக அவருக்குக் கற்றுக் கொடுத்தார். 1894-ல் இவரது ஓவியங்கள் மிகச் சிறந்ததாக விளங்கவே தனது புருசை தனது மகனிடம் கொடுத்துவிட்டு தான் இனி ஓவியம் தீட்டுவதில்லை என உறுதி பூண்டார். பேப்லோ தனது கல்லூரியிலே சிறந்த மாணவராக வெளி வந்தார்.

அவரது ஓவியங்கள் இன்று உலகமெங்கிலும் பல்வேறு அருங்காட்சியகங்களிலும் காட்சிக் கூடங்களிலும் பாதுகாக்கப்பட்டுக் காட்சியில் வைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன.

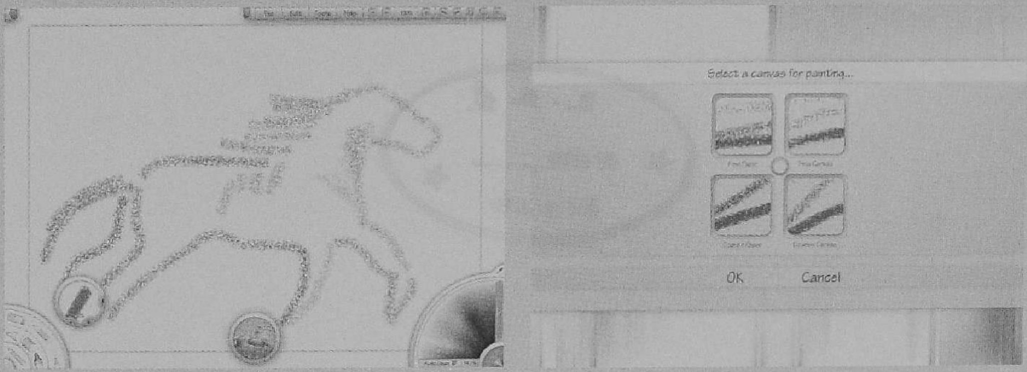
"நம் எல்லோருக்கும் கலை உண்மையானதல்ல என்பது தெரிந்ததுதான். கலை என்பது உண்மையை உணர வைக்கும் ஒரு பொய்யாகும; அதாவது நாம் புரியும் அளவுக்கு கொடுக்கப்பட்ட ஒரு உண்மை"
-பேப்லோ பிக்காஸோ

அவரது ஓவியங்களில் சிறந்த ஒரு ஓவியத்தை இங்கே காண்கிறோம். அறிவியலும் உதவுதலும் என்ற இந்த ஓவியம் 1897-ல் துணியில் வரையப்பட்ட எண்ணெய் வண்ண ஓவியமாகும்.இன்று இவ்வோவியம் ஸ்பெயின் நாட்டிலுள்ள பார்சிலோனா என்ற ஊரிலுள்ள பிக்காஸோ அருங்காட்சியகத்தில் பாதுகாப்பாகக் காட்சிப்படுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளது.

A Peep into IT

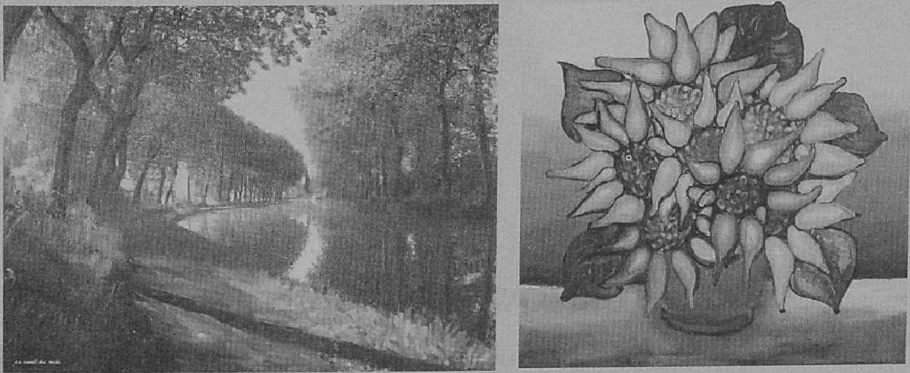
ArtRage is a painting package designed to provide a realistic and fun simulation of using paint on a canvas, along with pens, pencils, crayons, and other tools. ArtRage is available for both Windows and Mac OS X. It can be used with a mouse, but works better if you have a graphics tablet, or even better on a Tablet PC where ArtRage takes advantage of the unique interaction of pen and screen to produce a realistic painting feel.

ArtRage is all about playing with paint without the mess, and having fun in the process. You can paint your own image from a blank canvas to completed work, or load in a picture to trace and have the tools pick their colours for you as you paint over it.



Screenshots of ArtRage

ArtRage is a freeware. This excellent software can be downloaded for free at http://www.ambientdesign.com/artrage.html.



Contributed artwork of the people who use ArtRage

- Abraham Durairaj

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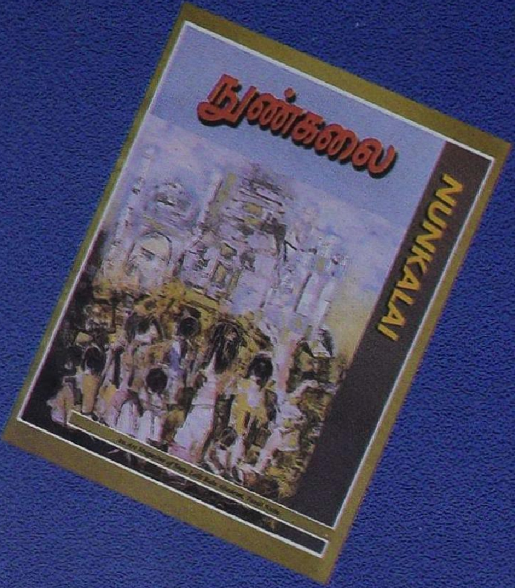
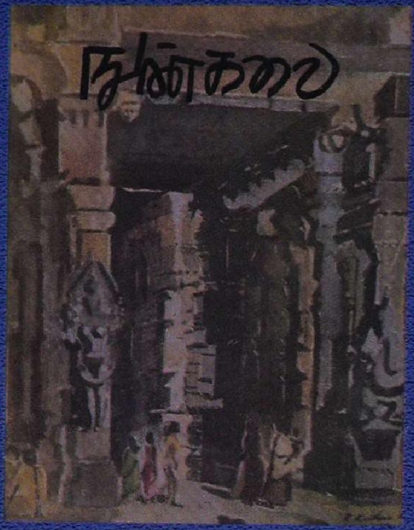
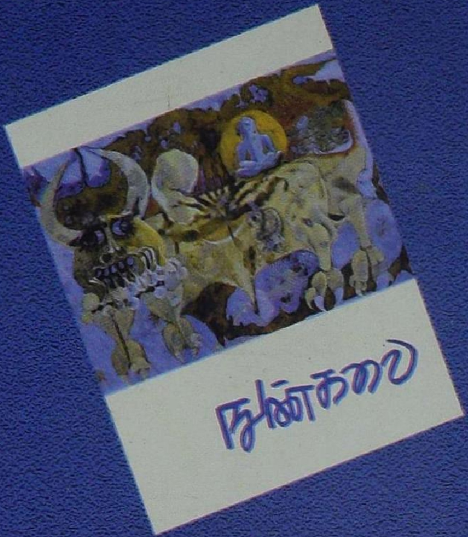
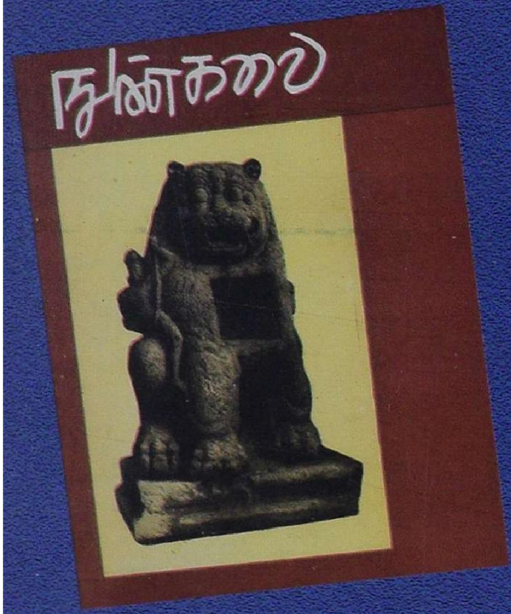
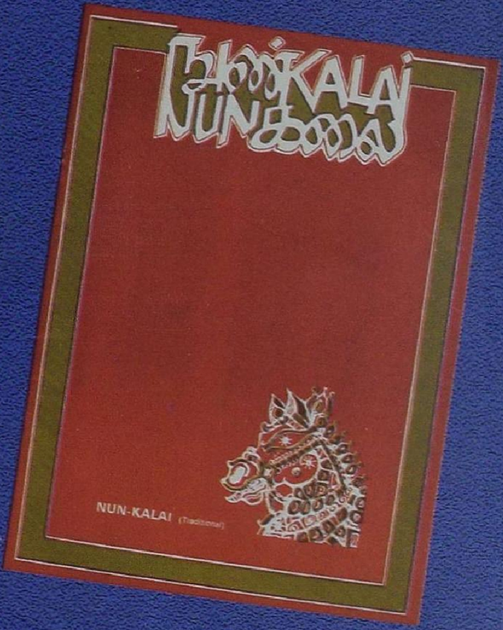
-Editor

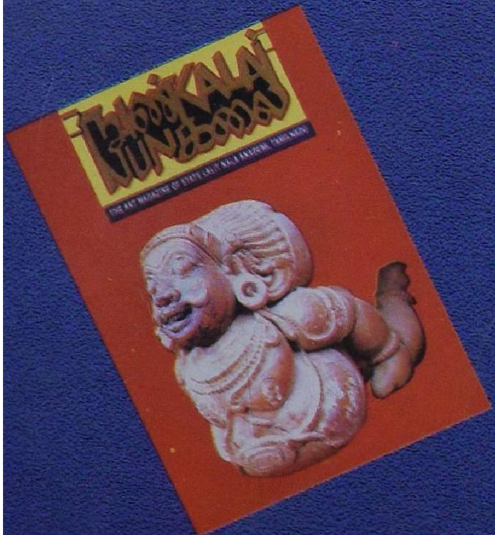


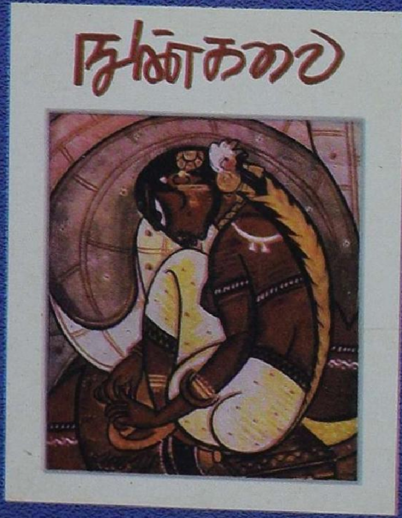


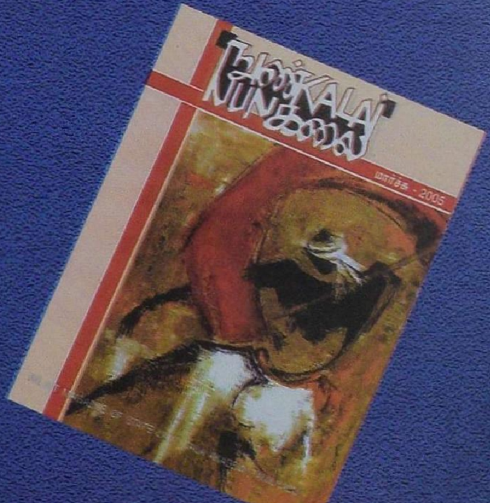












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